

**Mixed domains and multilingual practices**  
**- an ethnographic study of Tanzanian university**  
**students' language use**

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## **Abbreviations and vocabulary**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| LOI        | language of instruction (in the education system)   |
| SAUT       | St. Augustine University of Tanzania  |
| mzungu     | a white-skinned/European person   |
| wazungu    | white-skinned/European person in plural   |
| Kizungu    | language of the white-skinned/European people (usually means English)   |
| Tanganyika | The name for the mainland of the United Republic of Tanzania; the name used for the area during the British colonial period                           |
| Zanzibar   | The semi-autonomous islands which form, a part of the United Republic of Tanzania   |
| ELTSP      | The English Language Teaching Support Project, a project funded by the British government to advance the use of English in Tanzanian education system |
| CSU        | Communication Skills Unit (at the university)   |

**Special thanks for valuable help during the process – asanteni sana wote!**

Emma Simon Palonen

Lotta Aunio

Helena Jerman

Tom Fisher

Salla Korhonen

Ludovick Myumbo

Emmanuel Chrisant

+ all the students!

## **ABSTRACT**

The setting of the study is the campus of the St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), located in the city of Mwanza in Tanzania. The study is an ethnographic analysis about the different meanings the SAUT university students give to the languages they use in their lives. These meanings are related to Tanzania's historical and political context. The emphasis is on the meanings of the languages in relation to Tanzania's education system.

The study can be placed in the tradition of linguistic anthropology and ethnography of communication, originally developed by Dell Hymes. The data is collected during a seven month university exchange in 2010-2011 and it consists of participant observation, nine student interviews and 33 questionnaires filled in by the students.

The data is analysed thematically and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of linguistic practice and linguistic habitus are used as tools. The study asks how these concepts enable understanding and describing the linguistic situation of the students. Furthermore, the meanings the students give to the languages are related to discussion about symbolic meanings and positions of languages in societies.

The study illustrates how the different practical and symbolic meanings the society and especially the education system give to the different languages influence the meaning of languages for individuals. Despite the fact that the students seem to connect the languages to certain specific contexts of use, actually the students mix languages creatively in different domains. Therefore linguistic practice can be considered to be a good concept for describing their practical language use. The concept of linguistic habitus merges the social and individual and brings out the society's common perceptions concerning the different languages and their use.

The study describes language usage and meanings of languages in a multilingual society. It casts light on the meaning of the language of instruction up to the university level and the ways the local languages are used in Tanzania.

African studies, ethnography of communication, linguistic anthropology, linguistic habitus, linguistic practice, multilingualism

## TIIVISTELMÄ

Tutkimus sijoittuu Mwanzan kaupungissa Tansaniassa sijaitsevan St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) -nimisen yliopiston kampukselle. Tutkimus on etnografinen analyysi siitä, millaisia merkityksiä SAUT:n yliopiston opiskelijat antavat elämässään käyttämilleen kielille. Nämä merkitykset sijoitetaan Tansanian monikielisen yhteiskunnan historialliseen ja poliittiseen kontekstiin. Tutkimuksessa korostuvat kielten merkitykset suhteessa Tansanian koulutusjärjestelmään.

Tutkimus sijoittuu kielitieteellisen antropologian ja alun perin Dell Hymesin kehittämän viestinnän etnografian (ethnography of communication) perinteeseen. Tutkimusmateriaali on kerätty pääasiassa seitsemän kuukauden yliopistovaihdon aikana 2010-2011 ja se koostuu osallistuvasta havainnoinnista, 9 opiskelijan haastattelusta ja 33 kyselylomakkeesta.

Aineisto analysoidaan temaattisesti käyttäen Pierre Bourdieun linguistic practice- ja linguistic habitus -käsitteitä. Tutkimuksessa kysytään, miten näiden käsitteiden avulla voidaan ymmärtää ja kuvata opiskelijoiden kielellistä tilannetta. Opiskelijoiden kielille antamia merkitykset liitetään myös kielten symbolista ja yhteiskunnallista asemaa koskevaan keskusteluun

Tutkimus havainnollistaa, miten voimakkaasti yhteiskunnan ja erityisesti koulutusjärjestelmän eri kielille antamat käytännölliset ja symboliset merkitykset vaikuttavat yksilöiden kielille antamiin merkityksiin. Vaikka opiskelijat yhdistävät kielet tiettyyn käyttökonteksteihin, he käytännössä sekoittavat kieliä luovasti ja käyttävät niitä sekaisin eri konteksteissa. Tämän vuoksi Bourdieun linguistic practice -käsitteen voi katsoa soveltuvan hyvin kuvaamaan opiskelijoiden kielellisiä käytäntöjä. Kielellinen habitus taas toimii sosiaalisen ja henkilökohtaisen kokemuksen yhdistävänä käsitteenä ja tuo esiin tansanialaisessa yhteiskunnassa yleiset käsitykset eri kielistä ja niiden käytöstä.

Tutkimus kuvaa monikielisen yhteiskunnan kielenkäytön tapoja ja merkityksiä. Sen kielenkäytön kuvaus valottaa erityisesti opetuskielen merkitystä yliopistotasolla sekä paikalliskielten käyttötapoja Tanzaniassa.

Afrikan-tutkimus, ethnography of communication, kielitieteellinen antropologia, linguistic habitus, linguistic practice, monikielisyys

# **1. Introduction**

This thesis is an ethnographic study about the multilingual reality of a university campus in Tanzania. It was born out of interest for language use in a context in which a person with a principally monolingual background encountered the complex multilingual reality of an African society. University students' accounts concerning the use of different languages in their life on the campus form the core of this study.

In this chapter I first discuss multilingualism as a phenomenon and concept. After that I introduce the research topic and research questions more precisely. The chapter is ended by relating this study to anthropological and ethnographic studies in general, and to previous research on the topic.

## **1.1. Multilingualism in the contemporary world**

Most people in the world use more than one language in their daily life; this means that most societies are multilingual. This is clearly seen when the amount of states (ca. 200) and the amount of languages (6000-7000) in the world are compared (Latomaa 2013, 119-120; Tucker 1999). According to the analysis of John R. Edwards (1994, 33-34), multilingualism occurs, for example, due to linguistic contact through different forms of migration, political unions among different linguistic groups, and communication needs around boarder areas.

H. Ekkehard Wolff (2000, 314) claims that in African societies, multilingualism among individuals is more the norm than the exception. It is very common that several languages are spoken within the borders of one African state. This at least partially results from the influence of colonial policies for state formation: boarders of many African states were drawn rather artificially by the colonial conquerors and therefore different ethnic groups speaking different languages have ended up living within the borders of one state. This has made diglossia or triglossia a common phenomenon in African societies: there are two, three or even more languages, which are used for different functions in the society. The individuals have to learn these different languages in order to cope in the societies, and it is not uncommon that the languages are often connected to ideas of prestige and social acceptance. (Ibid., 314-315, 323.)

When discussing social use of language, the sociolinguistic concept of 'domain' is often used. It

refers to certain settings, in which the same participants tend to choose to speak a certain language. Domains are usually more related to socio-cultural context than the topic: depending on the social setting and the people participating in the discussion, different languages can be used to talk about issues concerning a certain topic. Typical domains are, for example, family, education or religion. In monolingual settings different varieties of one language can be used in the different domains. (Ibid., 307.)

Despite this multilingual reality, there is usually one national or official language in African states. This can also be seen as a legacy from the colonial times: the Herderian model of the European states with one symbolic national language has influenced the choices the African states have made. It can be argued that the whole concept of multilingualism originates from the monolingual ideology of the European, homogeneous nation state. Purely monolingual state is actually a sort of mythical, imaginary concept, which is based on the idea of standardized majority language. Nevertheless, multilingualism is considered as exception of the normative monolingualism, and in the predominately monolingual countries multilingualism is often seen even as a threat or a problem. (Latomaa 2013, 119-120; Heller 2012, 24; Blackledge & Creese 2010, 7; Mberia 2008, 1; Simpson 2008, 2-3, 12; Swilla 1992, 506.)

Nowadays multilingualism is more and more common also in the ideally monolingual Europe. Sheena Gardner and Marilyn Martin-Jones (2012, 1) describe how globalization and changes in political and economic policies in different regions have caused increased transnational flows of people and brought unequalled amounts of people from different linguistic areas into contact with each other. Also the advancement of communication technology has increased multilingual contacts. This has changed the way multilingual realities and the relationship between language and society have been researched in the last 20 years, and made multilingualism an important topic of investigation. (Ibid., 1.)

The multilingual reality of Tanzania is based on triglossia between Kiswahili, English and the local languages of the circa 120 ethnic groups of the country. This triglossia is in contrast with the seemingly monolingual Kiswahili -based national language policies practised by the Tanzanian state. In practice Tanzanians lead a multilingual life, in which the different languages have different functions and different domains of use, and these domains are constantly changing and overlapping each other. (Rubagumya 1990, 10.) This contradiction forms the starting point of the research described in this thesis.



## 1.2 Language and society

Mikko Lehtonen (1996, 108-110) describes the long history of academic discussion concerning the relationship between language and society. In the background of this discussion are the opposing views that language is either a fundamentally linguistic or a fundamentally social phenomenon. This division is connected to the discussion about the meanings of words: are the meanings created in relation to each other within the grammatical “language system” or in relation to the social context in which they are used? (Ibid., 108-110.)

In social sciences, the meanings of words, sentences or other linguistic expressions are considered as socially constructed. M.A.K Halliday (1978; 3, 160) argues that although all individuals have their own ways of meaning, in the end all meanings are defined by the social context and interaction with other people. It can be even argued that the meanings created by language are the meanings which construct the whole social reality, because the meanings which concern reality are usually only in linguistic form. In any case, it is clear that language is a very important factor in the process of making the world meaningful. (Lehtonen 1996; 20, 33, 35, 212.)

Halliday (1978, 3) writes that language not only expresses but also symbolizes social processes. Meanings in a certain culture are often in the form of linguistic symbols, that is in the words for describing or symbolizing the social processes. These meanings are the ones that make the world meaningful and therefore it can be argued that the common understanding about the meaning of the social reality is to a large extent based on language. (Lehtonen 1996; 14-19; Bourdieu 1991, 166.)

Clifford Geertz (1973, 89) writes that human culture is based on shared meanings in symbolic form, and that analysing culture means searching for these meanings. Therefore if one wants to analyse culture, the symbols that carry meaning need to be analysed. Because language is one of the main symbols carrying meaning, analysing it can be seen as analysing culture. (Lehtonen 1996; 14-15, 18-19; Bourdieu 1991, 166; Geertz 1973; 5, 12.) I see that this study follows Geertz’s tradition in analysis of culture: it is an attempt to search for social meanings in their symbolized linguistic forms, and through that analyse social interaction between humans, the culture.

### **1.3. The research question and research objectives**

The study is based on data collected in 2010-2011 at the university campus of St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), which is located in the city of Mwanza on the shore of Lake Victoria in north-western Tanzania. The data consists of participant observation, interviews with students and questionnaires with open-ended questions. The data was collected during a 7-month long stay on the campus as a foreign student.

Basically, the linguistic reality of the students is characterized by the Tanzanian triglossia between Kiswahili, English and local languages of the ethnic groups. There is nevertheless considerable variation among the students: while some students do not speak any local languages some students speak more than one local language. My interest is to connect these individual linguistic situations to the social meanings the languages have in the Tanzanian linguistic reality.

In deciphering what the languages mean for the students I analyse the practical language use of the students, the linguistic choices the students make, and the interpretations and explanations they give about their language use. Due to the setting of the study, the meaning of the language of instruction (LOI) in the education system is emphasized. My intention is to form an ethnographic, holistic picture of the students' linguistic practices and relate this individual language use to societal questions. In other words, the aim is to provide the kind of thick description Clifford Geertz (1973, 6-10) has defined as the goal of analytic, anthropological research: detailed, analytic knowledge of a social phenomenon, which includes a theoretical perspective concerning the community and/or phenomenon under research.

My theoretical framework consists of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of linguistic habitus and linguistic practice. I analyze the language use and the multilingual practices the students perform and see them in reference to the symbolic role languages have in societies.

The research questions are:

- 1 What kinds of social and personal meanings the different languages have for the students?
- 2 How are these meanings constructed in relation to different societal, political and historical processes in the Tanzanian society?
- 3 What kinds of symbolic meanings and roles the students give to the languages?
- 4 Are Pierre Bourdieu 's concepts 'linguistic practice' and 'linguistic habitus' useful for

understanding and describing the linguistic situation of the students?

The structure of this thesis is as follows:

In Chapter 2 I situate the study in its context: the historical developments of Tanzanian linguistic situation and education system. Following this, the field of this study is introduced: the university, my position there and the data collected. Introduction of the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu and the approach used in the analysis of data follows in Chapter 4. In Chapters 5-8 the data is analysed and some concluding remarks are made in Chapter 9.

#### **1.4. Conceptual considerations: ethnic groups and their languages**

Before proceeding, I want to clarify how I use two central concepts in this thesis: the concepts I use to describe the ethnic background of the students and the concepts I use for the language of the Tanzanian ethnic groups.

Laura Huttunen (2005, 123-124) describes how due to its connections to colonialism, the word 'tribe' is considered problematic in anthropology. It was used around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by early anthropologists, who researched the "primitive" societies of the 'tribes.' At the time tribes were seen as the static and clearly distinguishable entities which stood in contrast with the "modern", industrial states. But after the colonized countries became independent around mid-20th century, it was not possible to divide the world into modern and pre-modern like the conception of tribe presumed. In anthropology the concept of tribe was replaced with the concept of ethnic group, and this is still the main concept used. (Ibid., 123-124.)

Basically the concept of ethnic group still includes the idea of researching something strange and exotic. In addition, it still includes the assumption that people form static and homogeneous cultural "units" This is often not true: the groups that people identify themselves with are constantly changing and re-defining their borders in relation to other groups - ethnicity is not a stable definition. (Keese 2010, 18; Davies 2008, 39-40; Huttunen 2005, 124.) For example, if one's parents have different ethnic origin and belong to different ethnic groups, it's possible to see oneself as a member of many ethnic groups.

Today it is agreed that ethnicity, a dynamic form of consciousness and ethnic identity with a certain group, can be formed in many ways. For example, the experience of ethnic identity with a certain group does not always necessitate knowledge of the language associated with the group in question. (Jerman 1997, 50; Legère 2002, 165-166.) In order to follow the emic way in which the students in my data describe these groups they consider to be a part of, I will use the words 'tribe' and 'ethnic group.'

For describing the languages of the ethnic groups in Tanzania, I use the concepts of 'local language' or 'language of the tribe/of the ethnic group'. I do not use the concept of 'mother tongue', although that is the most common concept the students and Tanzanians in general use for referring to the languages of the ethnic groups. This is because I see that the meaning the students give to the 'mother tongue' is different from the meaning usually given to the concept – that it is the language a person has learned as the first language as a child in the community of the parents and in which a person feels he can express him/herself the best. (Legère 2002, 165; Wolff 2000, 299.) The meaning the students give to the concept of 'mother tongue' will be further discussed in Chapter 8 but at this point I want to clarify the concepts I use. These are both concepts also used by the students.

I have chosen to use the term of local language because it is neutral when it comes to the competence factor, that is if the language is learned as the first or second language or if it is known at all. Also the locality of the languages of the ethnic groups was brought up by many of the students and therefore it seems logical to refer to it also in the term describing the language – these different local meanings of the languages are discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 8. The choice for the term 'local language' can be also criticized: Swilla (1992, 505-506) points out, all the African languages could be called local languages, and Karsten Legère (2002, 167) argues many of these "local" languages like Kisukuma have millions of speakers. Nevertheless, I see the use of the term justified in the context of my thesis.

Despite the somewhat problematic connotations described above I also use the concept of the 'language of the tribe', because just like the concept of tribe, it's used by the students themselves. The local languages are called the also vernacular languages by some students, but I avoid using it due to its problematic connotations<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The term vernacular language is etymologically derived from Latin words 'vernaculus', which means 'domestic, native', and 'vena', which means 'home-born slave' (Pearsall 1998, 2054 in Legère 2002, 167). 'Vernacular' as word thus evokes connotations to slavery. Wolff (2011, 80-81) sees that the way 'vernacular language' is used as a concept

In Kiswahili the local languages are called *lugha za jamii* ('languages of societies or communities') and *lugha za awali* ('languages of origin') but as Legère (2002, 167) argues, their use would cause confusion because they do not differentiate the dominant Kiswahili from the other languages. Basically the word for 'tribe' in Kiswahili is 'kabila' but the students in my data use it only in a couple of occasions; the somewhat problematic history of the word is discussed in 232. Malin Petzell (2012a, 137) calls the local languages minority languages, not because of their numeral minority, but because of their use in marginal, non-formal domains and because they are subordinate to English and Kiswahili.

I also use the abbreviation L1, with which I refer to the first language learned by the child. In research of multilingualism, abbreviations L2, L3 and so on are used for describing the languages learned in the later stages of life<sup>2</sup> (Wolff 2000; 299, 321). The L1 is the language used for thinking and communication and bilingual individuals can have more than one language in the position of L1. The L1 of Tanzanians in general and the students in this study is practically always Kiswahili or a local language (cf. Mwinsheikhe 2003, 132).

### **1.5. My study as linguistic anthropology and ethnography of communication**

Within the discipline of anthropology, this study can be placed in the tradition of linguistic anthropology<sup>3</sup>, and within the framework of ethnographic research it can be seen as an ethnography of communication. According to Alessandro Duranti's (1997, 4) description, linguistic anthropology studies language as a social practise and as a set of symbolic relations. Duranti continues that linguistic anthropology looks at how language creates and allows differentiation between cultures, individuals and identities. It connects language to anthropological topics like the relations between cultural systems and social organizations or the role of material conditions of existence for people's understanding of the world. (Ibid.; 3- 4, 7.) Blackledge & Creese (2010, 69-74) describe how

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in the discourse concerning multilingualism contrasts multilingualism negatively with monolingualism. The whole concept thus evokes quite negative connotations and therefore I do not want to use it.

<sup>2</sup> This is different from the way for example Ström (2013, 7) uses the term: with L1 she refers to "the language of parents and/or community that you grow up with, and that you can speak and understand. Not necessarily the language you learn first or the language in which you have the best competence."

<sup>3</sup> For discussion concerning the differentiation of linguistic anthropology, anthropological linguistics and sociolinguistics see Duranti 1997.

linguistic anthropology is useful for studying multilingualism.

Anthropological studies of language started to develop in the 1960s and 1970s: Dell Hymes, who can be seen one of the founding fathers of this linguistic orientation in anthropology, claimed that sociolinguistic studies of languages are not enough. Hymes saw that in order to define the role of language in cultures and societies, linguistically oriented anthropological studies of languages are needed. (Blackledge & Creese 2010, 62; Duranti 1997; 3- 4; Bloome 2012, 22.)

The importance of language to anthropology had been acknowledged already in the early days of the discipline. In the beginning of the 20th century, two classic anthropologists, Franz Boas and Bronislaw Malinowski, combined linguistic and ethnographic views, and stressed that it is important to learn the language of the society studied. Malinowski did this in order to understand the perspective of the people studied and Boas in order to understand the cultural meanings the language was believed to contain. Especially among the American anthropologists there have been demands for better and more systematic tools for analysis of language. (Davies 2008; 79- 80, 87; Duranti 1997, 7; Gumberz 1972, 6; Hymes 1972, 28.)

Ethnographies of communication, or linguistically oriented ethnographic studies emerged as a method of linguistic anthropology. Hymes first called these studies 'ethnographies of speaking' but changed the name into ethnographies of communication in 1964. These types of ethnographies can also be called linguistic ethnographies. (Duranti 1997, 4.) According to Muriel Saville-Troike's definition (1989; 8, 3), ethnographies of communication concentrate on language use and its patterns in the society and culture in question. They concern issues like social organizations, roles, relationships, values and beliefs and other types of shared knowledge. (Saville-Troike (1989; 8, 3.)

Like any ethnographic study's goal, also the goal of ethnography of communication is to produce the kind of 'thick description' famously described by Clifford Geertz (Blackledge & Creese 2012, 92; Bloome 2012, 9; Rowsell 2012, 114.). Ethnographies of communication provide an important theoretical and methodological framework for researching meanings of linguistic practices. They show how language practices are made concrete in people's actual lives and how and why language matters to people. (Grenfell 2012, 175; Blackledge & Creese 2010, 18).

Saville-Troike (1989, 10) argues that the contributions of ethnographies of communication will be limited if the methods and findings are not "integrated with other descriptive and analytical

approaches.” This refers to the holistic nature of ethnographic research: it is supposed to produce an analysis which takes into account as many aspects as possible. In ethnographies of communication, this holistic approach is visible in the use of methodologies which originate from other disciplines; mainly anthropology and linguistics but also from applied linguistics, cultural studies, sociolinguistics and sociology. Although ethnography of communication sees language as a socially situated cultural form, it also includes the need to analyse the “code”, the language itself. (Ibid., 8-10.)

On one hand there has also been criticism concerning the interdisciplinary and open nature of linguistic ethnography, because in different disciplines the epistemological assumptions might be quite different from each other and this can make defining the concepts problematic. On the other hand, this interdisciplinary nature of ethnography of communication enables looking closely and locally while combining the observations to issues like relations of power and ideology on a wider level. Also the epistemological shift in social sciences into critical and ethnographic approach has enabled the connection of language practices, social differences and social inequality. The poststructuralist theory and especially the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1991) have offered important conceptualizations for this critical, ethnographic study of language. (Martin & Gardner-Jones 2012, 1-3; Blackledge & Creese 2010; 18, 61-62, 67-68; Saville-Troike 1989, 9.)

This study can be positioned in the tradition of linguistic anthropology and ethnography of communication because it concerns linguistic meaning-making processes, the social practices of making the languages meaningful in the lives of the informants. The local, empiric approach is combined with issues of ideology and symbolic meaning-making on a wider level. The relationship between language, social differentiation and material conditions are also touched upon. My academic background as a linguist is seen for example therein that I analyse the relationship between social and linguistic phenomena also through the actual linguistic expressions, “the code”. The use of Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of practice and habitus as the theoretic framework of the study re-confirms the nature of this study as ethnographic communication.

## **1.6. Previous research on language, society and education in Tanzania**

Issues of language of instruction (LOI) in the Tanzanian education system and the position of English in Tanzania have been studied by many scholars. These studies concern language policies

and the use of English or other colonial languages in Tanzania and Africa in general. In this thesis reference is made for example to Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2003, Kadege 2003, Kapinga, Lwaitama, Rubagumaya, Rugemalira & Tetlow (1990), Mutasa 2003, Mwinsheikhe 2003, Prah 2003, Roy-Campbell 1990, Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997 and Yahua-Otman 1990.

In some of these studies reference is made to other, older studies from the 1970s and 1980s, which have been impossible for me to access. For example Grace Khwaya Puja (2003, 122) refers to S. North's (1985) study which deals with the language proficiency of the first year students of University of Dar Es Salaam and the consequences the lack of proficiency might have for their academic achievements. These studies show that there has been interest in the LOI question already in the 1970s. Almost all of the studies concerning the LOI in Tanzania have concentrated on primary and secondary level education and there are very few studies dealing with language use at Tanzanian universities.

J.M Rugemalira's article (1990) analyses the significance and impact of the Communication Skills Unit established in 1978 at the University of Dar Es Salaam. This unit was established because of the concern and critique expressed by the lecturers and external examiners about the students' ability to express themselves in English and the influence of this on study performance.

Grace Khwaya Puja's PhD thesis on sociology of education (2001), in which her article (2003) concerning the language use of university students is based, is the only study I found with somewhat similar, ethnographic approach as mine. In her research of 1997 she used focus group discussions, observation, questionnaires and analysed documents. Her informants consisted of 73 second year female undergraduates in three Tanzanian universities. In her article, Puja looks at the language issue in African (higher) education from a postcolonial perspective and relates it to the concrete problems connected to the LOI and the lack of resources at the universities. Puja describes the strong role of Kiswahili on the three campuses she studied, the effect of the language in the social interaction with the lecturers and the linguistic expressions concerning the studies the students have developed.

Mari-Anne Okkolin's (2013) recent PhD thesis of education is also set in a university framework in Tanzania, but otherwise her approach is very different from that of this study. Her study looks at female students of the University of Dar Es Salaam from a feminist perspective. Okkolin explores how political, institutional, socio-cultural and socio-economic factors influence the education of



women in Tanzania.

There has been only random research into the languages of the ethnic groups in Tanzania. Farouk Topan (2008, 263) and Karsten Legère (2002, 181) write that there have been relatively many studies of the individual languages especially of the north-western Tanzania, but the languages of central and southern Tanzania are less known. Some studies of the individual languages contain also sociolinguistic elements (cf. Malin Petzell 2012b, Eva-Marie Ström 2013), but there are few, if any, studies about the social position of the local languages in general.

All in all, research concerning language use in Tanzanian universities seems to be scant and therefore this study offers a new perspective on the LOI question in Tanzania. The study also sheds light on the contemporary position and role of the local languages in Tanzania.

## **2. Situating Tanzania: language, education and history**

In this chapter I introduce Tanzania as a country especially from the linguistic point of view. This is necessary because these historical and societal features form the background for the whole study. After general introduction, I go through Tanzania's (linguistic) history and relate it to the general developments on the African continent. At the end of the chapter, I discuss the issues related to Tanzanian the education system and the language of instruction.

Before proceeding I want to clarify why I have decided to call the language commonly known as Swahili with the word that Kiswahili speakers use for the language, Kiswahili. In Kiswahili language, the name of a language is always indicated with the prefix ki-: Kiswahili instead of Swahili, Kiingereza (English) instead of Ingereza or Kisukuma instead of Sukuma. There are different practices of referring to the Tanzanian languages in English (Petzell 2012a, 136). Legère (2002, 166) refers to the languages without the prefix ki- because according to him the prefix does not mean anything in English. If it were used, for the consistency all other prefixes should be used, too (for example 'a Tanzanian' would have to be referred as 'Mtanzania' in singular and 'Watanzania' in plural). He claims that if the Kiswahili name for Kiswahili is used then the same should be done for all other languages, too.

I nevertheless restrict the use of ki- prefix to the Tanzanian languages. I want to use the word

society I'm studying uses for the language. In addition, this decision leaves the word 'Swahili' to function as an adjective to describe for example the Swahili people and their traditions on the East African coast. I use this same differentiation also for the other Tanzanian languages vs. adjective use of the word (Kisukuma vs. Sukuma people). In doing this, I follow the way Farouk Topan (2008, 254) and Grace Khwaya Pujja (2003, 117) have used these two variants. This differentiation is also not irrelevant for the reader, because there are some concepts used in this thesis for which the use of the prefix ki- is relevant (Kizungu, Kiswanglish).

I also see the use of these names for the languages in relation to the theme of my thesis: playing with words and mixing especially the Kiswahili and English languages is such an elementary part of the Tanzanian linguistic reality that it, just for the fun of it, should be visible in the words of my thesis.

## **2.1. Basic facts**

The United Republic of Tanzania (Jamhuri Muungano wa Tanzania) is located on the coast of East Africa. Tanzania consists of the mainland Tanganyika and the semi-autonomous islands of Zanzibar; the name of the country is an acronym of the first syllables of these two parts. The administrative capital of Tanzania is Dodoma and the biggest city of the country is Dar Es Salaam.

Tanzania's population consists of about 45 000 000 people and most of them are quite young. NBS, Tanzania's National Bureau of Statistics (2013a; 23-24) and the UN country profile estimate that 44% of Tanzanians are younger than 15 years old and 35% are between 15 to 35 years old. Life expectancy at birth varies between 51 and 60 years (NBS 2013a; 23-24, UN country profile). 70% of Tanzanians live in the rural area and practice agriculture, but according to the UN, CIA and World Bank estimates<sup>4</sup>, the annual urban population growth rate of the country is around 4.7 % which means that the cities are growing very fast. The country is thus inhabited mainly by young people who most likely will live in the cities (NBS 2013a, 59-60; Ewald 2010, 227; World Bank 2009, 1). Although there have been some quite positive economic growth trends in the last years, Tanzania is a very poor country and especially the rural population lives below poverty line (World Bank Tanzania overview, Ewald 2010, 224; World Bank 2009, ix; Brock-Utne 2000, 25.)

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<sup>4</sup> Sources: The World Bank open data; United Nations Data Country Profile Tanzania; The World Factbook of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Tanzania page.

The official languages of Tanzania are Kiswahili and English. Kiswahili is the national language spoken by practically everybody in the country, although not all Tanzanians speak Kiswahili as their first language (L1). In addition to everyday communication, Kiswahili is used in the parliament, generally in politics and in the legal system, except in courts except higher court, in which English is used. Kiswahili is the language with the biggest number of speakers in the Bantu language group, the largest language group in Africa. (Petzell 2012a; 137, 141; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 82.)

English is used mainly in the education system and for international communication (diplomacy, foreign trade). According to the 2012 Tanzania Human Rights Report (LHCR 2013, 146), only about 5% of Tanzanians use English for communication. Because of this small percentage, nowadays English should be seen more as a foreign or international language than a second language in Tanzania (cf. H.R. Trappes-Lomax 1990). In practice mainly highly educated Tanzanians speak English fluently and most Tanzanians know only a few words of it. (Kapinga & al 1990, 29; Schmied 1990 124; Yahya-Othman 1990, 47).

In addition to English and Kiswahili<sup>5</sup>, there are the languages of the different ethnic groups of the country. As discussed in 1.6, due to the lack of research it is not easy to find accurate information about the number of these groups and the languages (cf. Petzell 2012a, 136; Puja 2003, 121; Legère 2002, 165). Based on different sources, I would conclude that there are about 125 living languages of the ethnic groups in Tanzania (Ethnologue Language Catalogue; Batibo 2005 in Topan 2008, 252) but I found estimates going up to even 141 languages (Joshua Project Tanzania page). The definition of language affects these numbers, because in some calculations different varieties or dialects of a language are counted as different languages and in some they are not (Petzell 2012a, 136). Like Kiswahili, many local languages in Tanzania are Bantu languages and therefore resemble Kiswahili in structures and/or vocabulary. According to the Ethnologue Language Catalogue, there are also some Nilotic and Cushitic languages and some language isolates (languages with no known genetic relationships with other languages) among the local languages.

The majority of the ethnic groups and their languages in East Africa are small: most languages are spoken only by a couple of hundred or thousand people and only a few have more than 4 million speakers. Only the biggest languages like Kikuyu in Kenya or Kichagga and Kisukuma in Tanzania have millions of speakers and include several language varieties. This should be seen in contrast to

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to these, according to the East Africa Living Encyclopedia there are up to 4 languages spoken in Tanzania's vigorous Indian community of Tanzania.

West Africa, where the languages of the ethnic groups can have up to 10-20 million speakers. (Ström 2013, 39; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 139; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 66; East Africa Living Encyclopedia.) However, Legère (2002, 165-166) points out that if there is a question about the ethnic background in the census or other enquiries, there is usually no question about language knowledge. There is thus no reliable statistical information about the amount of people who are competent in a language nor about the amount of people who use a certain language as their first language.

Abdu M. Khamisi (1974, 289 in Legère 2002, 173) wrote already in the 1970s that very little has been written about the practical language use in Tanzania - which languages are actually spoken, how many speakers the language have and in which situations are the languages used. Because it has been difficult for me to find any information about the sociolinguistic situation of the languages of the ethnic groups, I assume the situation described by Khamisi has not changed that much.

Despite the somewhat hegemonic position of Kiswahili, Tanzanian society is thus essentially multilingual. In order for the reader to understand the linguistic situation in Tanzania, I will go through the historical developments which have led to the current situation. This is necessary also because the choice for selecting Kiswahili and English as official languages in Tanzania is connected to the wider picture of nation-building processes and the power relations in the newly independent African states in the 1950s and 1960s.

## **2.2. The question of national language in Africa**

According to Wolff (2000; 320, 341), the national language is the language or languages of a state that has an important function for national unity and identity. In a multilingual environment national language is usually the dominant language used for regional or nationwide communication. National languages can be 'de jure' national languages, languages officially recognized as national languages, or 'de facto' national languages, languages which are in practice spoken by the populations of the state. (Ibid.; 320, 341.)

Often the position of national language remains inferior compared to official languages. Official languages are the languages officially recognized and designated for use in official and public domains. Official languages are imposed on the whole population and form the politically dominant norm, to which other linguistic practises are measured. Official languages are also strongly

connected to the state and, as in the case of Tanzania, the functions of national and official language often also overlap each other. This is because developing an official standard language often becomes necessary precisely in the process of nation-building. (Blackledge & Creese 2010, 26; Wolff 2000, 341; Daoust 1997, 443; Bourdieu 1991; 45, 48.)

The choice for the national language in Tanzania is linked to a bigger picture concerning the nation-building processes in the many African states. Finding the way to make the citizens to be a part of a collective “whole” has been a challenge for many states of the continent (Simpson 2008, 1-6; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 60). Rephrasing Geertz (1973, 239-242), after the colonization period the new national identity of the independent states could not just be “ratified”, but it needed to be created. Due to the ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous populations of the new states, it was necessary to make the national languages into meaningful symbols for the nation (Simpson 2008; 1, 12).

Saville-Troike (1989, 204) writes that the inevitably political choice or preference of any of the local ethnic groups was often avoided in the African states by choosing the language of the old colonial master as the official language. She gives Nigeria as an example: there the choice for English as the official language was considered more neutral than choosing Yoruba, Hausa or Igbo, all languages of the biggest ethnic groups. Mazrui (1975, 15) writes that it is remarkable that English has not been rejected as a symbol of colonialism in the African states but that it is chosen as a neutral language free of tribalism<sup>6</sup>. Today African countries are still described as English- or French -speaking also by the Africans themselves. (Simpson 2008, 2-6; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998; 5-6, 140.)

Andrew Simpson (2008, 4-5) relates that in the newly independent African states there was also the purely practical need for one language to be used in the administration and education system. It was considered convenient if this language would also perform the more emotive nation-building functions. In many countries there was lack of one single indigenous language known by the whole population – Tanzania with Kiswahili is quite an exceptional case. (Ibid., 4-5.)

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<sup>6</sup> Tribalism basically means emphasis of the ethnic identity. It is a widely discussed issue in African societies. In many African countries, tribalism and fear of ethnic division of the society is contrasted with need for political unification or nationalism. Tribalism has been accused of being one of the reasons for the internal problems in many African countries, for example in Kenya. (Chege 2010, 3-4.)

But whatever language an African country has chosen as the official language, all countries say they have chosen the language because of national unity. In most countries, none of the languages of the ethnic groups has been considered suitable for national needs. This is a common view despite the fact that the European languages chosen as national languages often have not had the capacity to unify the nation, as they have been spoken only by a minority of the population. (Swilla 1992, 511; Simpson 2008; 2-6, 12.)

Many African states do recognize the importance of the indigenous African language(s) for the cultural identity. These languages of the states can also be called national languages which need to be treasured as such, but which are ignored in practical policies (among others Cameroon, Sudan). In many countries different forms of culture like literature, theatre, TV/radio culture or music have often continued to be performed in the African languages. (Simpson 2008; 4, 9; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 83; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995; 30, 32; Swilla 1992, 510-511.)

All in all, these developments have made nationalism connected to African languages relatively uncommon on the continent. The national attachment of Tanzanians to Kiswahili is one of the exceptions of this (another example is for example the Somali language in Somalia). (Swilla 1992, 511; Simpson 2008; 2-6, 12.)

### **2.3. A short linguistic history of Tanzania**

The historical developments in the area nowadays known as Tanzania have a strong influence on the contemporary position of the different languages in the country. Understanding the linguistic history shows the political, social and cultural dimensions of the language question. In other words, the history of Tanzania with special reference to the linguistic situation needs to be covered shortly before proceeding.

The use of Kiswahili in Eastern Africa has a long history and Kiswahili has functioned in different kinds of positions in the area nowadays known as Tanzania. Kiswahili emerged most likely around the 9th century as the language of trade and it developed into a distinct language through pidgin and creole forms<sup>7</sup>. Kiswahili was the language predominantly spoken by the Muslim population on the

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<sup>7</sup> A pidgin language develops usually around trade routes and coastlines, where there is a need to communicate but no common language. Pidgin languages have elements of the new dominant language and of the local languages in its

East African coast<sup>8</sup>, until in the 19th century the trade practised by the Zanzibar Sultanates started to spread the language into the interior parts of the area nowadays known as mainland Tanzania. Before colonization also missionaries spread the language further from the coast. Kiswahili has one of the richest literary heritages on the African continent, but Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 172) argue that Kiswahili's role as an economic medium is older and stronger than its role as political or religious medium. (Petzell 2012a, 137-138; Topan 2008, 254-255; Brock-Utne & Halmarsdottir 2003, 117; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998; 166-168.)

The Germans conquered the area known as Tanganyika or nowadays Tanzania mainland in the 1890s and made it a part of the German East Africa, which existed in the years 1891-1919. Walter Rodney (1972, 256) claims that Tanganyika was the only colony conquered by the Europeans, in which the positive potential of the prevalent language of the area, Kiswahili, was acknowledged. He continues that Germans saw the potential of the language, because Kiswahili had already spread to trade and political relations and it was used by individuals.

The Germans started to use Kiswahili as the language of government administration in Tanganyika and promoted its use as the language of instruction (LOI) in schools. The Germans developed Kiswahili also because they thought that the people of Tanganyika would not be able to learn German. In addition they used Kiswahili for keeping social distance and showing their status to the Tanganyikans: by speaking only Kiswahili with them the language came to be used as a kind of symbolic buffer between their own and African culture. Germans transliterated Kiswahili from the Arab script to the Roman script in order to “de-islamitize” the language and to pacify the Kiswahili-speaking Muslim people inhabiting the coast. (Petzell 2012a, 137-138; Topan 2008, 253-255; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2003, 118; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 176-177; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995;

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grammar and vocabulary. They are used for restricted communication and have no native speakers. Sometimes a pidgin languages can become the first language for a population and languages developed through pidgin forms are called creole languages. (Wolff 2000, 325-326.)

<sup>8</sup> Kiswahili actually has a long history as the first language of the Swahili people, a linguistic and ethnic group which inhabits the Eastern African coastline (Kenya, Tanzania, northern Mozambique). The Swahili people practice their own form of Islam. The Swahili culture, the Uswahili, includes traditions of lifestyle, dress, architecture, music and song, cuisine and marriage customs and kinship patterns. The Islamic and Arab connections of Kiswahili are strong, but especially in Tanzania it has developed into a rather secularized language. There are claims that nowadays the ethnic group of Swahili people does not exist any more, as all citizens of Central and Eastern Africa can be called Swahili people. (Topan 2008, 256; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 170-171, 176.)

9, 11, 43, 36, 39; Iliffe 1989, 88-89.)

Helena Jerman (1997; 188, 197, 218-219) describes the German policies regarding the ethnic groups. One more reason for Germans to favour Kiswahili was that they found it inefficient to have to deal with too many different languages of the ethnic groups all over the German East Africa. The Germans accelerated the use of Kiswahili through their general policies concerning the ethnic groups. They defined and classified all the tribes of the German East Africa in order to impose new administrative structures on them. This resulted in emphasizing the differentiating features of the tribes. This conscious segregation and emphasis of cultural traits lead to not only imposing ethnic identities on people, but made ethnic differences a socially significant factor in a new way. By organizing people into new units with their own administrative structures the Germans destroyed the existing social networks of the communities. (Ibid.; 188, 197, 218-219.)

After the Germans had lost the first world war, German East Africa became a British colony. The British promoted English as the prestigious language of education and elites – it was the language used by the upper class and knowledge of it was the precondition for promotion and advancement in the colonial administration. English was the language of rulers and a symbol of the power of the politicians. All officials spoke English when they visited different areas and there was a translation into Kiswahili or the local language. This might have caused the wish to identify with the users of English, the need to show the rulers that one is able to speak their language, to join their group. This slowed down the spread of Kiswahili and made it almost a second-class language. (Petzell 2012a, 137-138; Topan 2008, 257; Roy-Campbell 1997, 116; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 43.)

At the same time, the British favoured the use of the local languages because they saw that the tribes formed natural groupings. According to the principle of indirect rule, the dominant idea of the British colonial politics to use the local power structures to govern the colonial states, these new units were based on indigenous institutions. The ethnic groups were again brought together under a new administrative unit. The people in one area were meant to be under one “ethnic chief.” This resulted into forcing people to change their ethnic identities in order to fit to the administrative borders. Tribal identities were thus again imposed on people and tribes were “scientifically” created. (Keese 2010, 16; Jerman 1997; 227-234, 244, 263.)

According to Alexander Keese (2010, 17), anthropologists and ethnologists conducted ethnographic research in order to define characteristics of the tribes. Basically ethnicity was manifested in



“culture” formed by language and customs and cultural distinctions defined the social status of individuals and groups of people. Both under the Germans and the British, belonging to a tribe was a means to function in the society and it was used as a political tool. It was possible for a chief of a “tribe” to manipulate the “culture” of the tribe in order to get power and advantages. All of this enhanced the social significance of ethnicity and promoted tribalism. (Jerman 1997; 227-234, 244.)

Kiswahili had had an important role already in the Maji Maji Resistance movement against the German rule in Tanganyika in 1905. After its spread to the interior parts of the country, it was used for mobilizing the country against British rule also in the 1950s. This was done by Julius Nyerere, the prospective first president of independent Tanzania, and his party Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Until 1947 the major political meetings of TANU and its predecessor the Tanganyika African Association were held in English, but after the requests from the members the language was changed into Kiswahili in 1947. This change meant that English was no longer associated with power and politics in the society. Tanzanian politicians started to use Kiswahili to identify themselves with the masses, and this most likely reduced the eagerness to learn English. (Petzell 2012a, 137-138; Roy-Campbell 1997, 117; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 160; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 36.)

The fact that Tanganyika was under the same imperial power as the British protectorate of Zanzibar was important for the spread of Kiswahili in Eastern Africa on the whole. There were not different colonial powers which competed about which dialect should be taken as the standard Kiswahili. Already in 1928 there had been a conference in Mombasa (nowadays in Kenya) to adopt the dialect of Zanzibar as the basis of standard Kiswahili. (Topan 2008, 256; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 170-171; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 44-45.)

The new socialist Republic of Tanzania was formed in 1964 as a union of Tanganyika and the former British protectorate of Zanzibar. Tanganyika had gained its independence in peaceful conditions in 1961 under the leadership of Julius Nyerere and TANU. Zanzibar had become independent in 1963 after which it sought union with the socialist Tanganyika. Kiswahili was chosen as the official language of the country because it was seen as quite a neutral language without connections to any specific ethnic group. (Petzell 2012a, 138; Werrema 2012; xii, xiv; Blommaert 2010, 65; Mazrui 1998 176-177; Wolff 2000, 335).

The 1967 Arusha declaration *Ujamaa na Kujitegemea* (Socialism and Self-reliance) formed the core

ideology of the socialist Tanzania. It was founded, among others, on absence of exploitation, political and economic non-alignment and pan-Africanism. Kiswahili has achieved the position it has now through its symbolic role in these socialist nation-building politics of Tanzania. It became the symbolic language of this ideologically unique, African-socialist *Ujamaa* policy and its spread in Tanzania was seen as a sign of the spread of this socialism. 'Socialism' as an English word carries many meanings and connotations with it, but Nyerere's idea of using an old Kiswahili word *Ujamaa* to describe African socialism created a whole new environment for this particular type of African socialism.<sup>9</sup> (Blommaert 2010, 183, Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 123.) Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 31) claim that president Nyerere wanted to make Kiswahili a “local equivalent of trans-continental, pan-African identity” and that he used the term to refer to anybody with an African origin (cf. Jerman 1997, 319).

Jan Blommaert (2010, 183) claims that the kind of Kiswahili that was supposed to be used in the new socialist Tanzania was the pure, standard language and not the commonly used, urban non-standard varieties of Kiswahili including for example code-switching or -mixing<sup>10</sup>. Kiswahili was thus also symbolic in its form. Originally the *Ujamaa* ideology's aim was to decimate all other languages except Kiswahili as well as the ideologies connected with them. Although this meant first of all getting rid of English and the capitalist, imperial ideology it carried, also the local languages were to be suppressed because they represented traditional, pre-colonial culture. (Ibid., 183.)

Blommaert (2010, 74) writes that one of the promises of the *Ujamaa* policies was that ‘Uzungu’ ('the ways of the West') was no longer to be the model for success in the society. Also the

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<sup>9</sup> The actual meaning of 'Ujamaa' is 'familyhood', but it is usually translated as African socialism. There are several Kiswahili words which were used in the *Ujamaa* policies with a consciously created socialist meaning. Also general political vocabulary in Kiswahili was developed as a part of the nation-building and socialist policies. (Topan 2008; 258, 260; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 187; Mazrui 1975, 63).

<sup>10</sup> *Code-switching* means changing the language used during a speech event like a discussion. The code can be switched for example when another speaker enters the situation, or when change of topic or domain make it natural to switch the language. An example of code-switching is a situation, in which the language is changed from Kiswahili to English when the topic of discussion changes from everyday life to university studies. *Code-mixing* refers to the phenomenon of using different elements of several languages or different varieties of the same language within a sentence. In the context of this study, code-mixing refers to borrowing words from another language when speaking ('tag-switching'), or using marked forms that identify the language forms which mark belonging to a certain variety (dialect, register, social category or alike). (Wolff 2000, 317-318; Saville-Troike 1989, 58-62; Blom & Gumberz 1972, 409.)

inequalities in the society before independence were meant to disappear during Ujamaa policies. (Ibid., 74.) As Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 161) write, nationalism is a rejection of the politics of 'the other' and due to the experiences of colonialism and enslavement, 'the others' for Africans usually refer to Europeans.

Michael Chege (2010, 3-4) analyses that for many years after the independence in 1964, the attachment to the ethnic identity and speaking other languages than Kiswahili was seen as a threat to the national unity. It was feared that this would promote tribalism and ethnic division in the society. President Nyerere stressed the important role of Kiswahili for the nation in the fight against tribalism. (Ibid., 3-4.) Kiswahili was supposed to secure its position through its role in the formation new loyalties concerning, among others, religion and nation. These loyalties were meant to replace the old ethnic ones. The word used for 'tribe' in Kiswahili, 'kabila', was replaced by the word 'jamii', which basically means the same but refers more to unification than to differentiation<sup>11</sup>. (Jerman 1997; 271, 274.)

Karsten Legère (2002, 170-172) argues that there has been a slight change in attitudes towards the local languages since the 1990s. In the Cultural Policy of 1997, the local languages are first of all mentioned and secondly defined as "national treasure and a source for elaborating Kiswahili terminology" - the practise of introducing words from local languages into Kiswahili has a long history (for example *bunge* for parliament). Michael Kadege (2003, 173) adds that in the Cultural Policy it was also emphasized that Tanzanians should have pride in the 'vernacular' languages and development of dictionaries and grammars for them should be continued.

Nowadays the Tanzanian school system uses songs, dances, poems and other forms of verbal art of the ethnic groups of the country, although usually through the medium of Kiswahili. There are also many books written by different scholars about the customs, history and other aspects of the ethnic groups. As described in 1.6., the local languages have also been studied by scholars, though not extensively. I have observed how ethnic groups are utilized in the tourism sector of Tanzania: the traditions of the "local", "original" or "exotic" tribes of Tanzania are introduced to tourists. There is

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<sup>11</sup> Jerman (1997, 48, 274) clarifies that the Kiswahili word 'kabila' originates from Arabic. In Arabic it means a political kin group. The word was consciously used in the colonial times as a term dividing people into categorized groups. According to the coastal Swahili people, originally 'kabila' actually means more 'kind' or 'type' than 'tribe'.

a Sukuma museum in Mwanza, which exhibits the life of this ethnic group, and visits to Maasai villages in the Serengeti National Park are offered for safari tourists. (Cf. Jerman 1997, 320.)

Kadeghe (2003, 173) nevertheless criticizes the 1997 Cultural Policy for not defining the domains in which the local languages could be used. There are no incentives for the use of the languages and Petzell (2012a, 139) writes that “in the UNESCO category for Governmental and Institutional Language Attitudes, the Tanzanian local languages are in the category of ‘passive assimilation:’ their use is not forbidden but they are handled with indifference.” In addition, Kiswahili has spread into domains where the local languages were previously used (Topan 2008, 263; Legère 2002, 169).

The use of the local languages can still be discouraged in public national and official situations. In the elections of 2005 the candidates were given directions to speak only Kiswahili (Petzell 2012b, 20). There are also restrictions for the use of other languages than Kiswahili in public meetings, even if the people present are all from the same ethnic group. The reason behind these policies is still that the local languages are seen as a threat to national unity and backward-looking. (LHCR 2012, 146; Petzell 2012a, 137-139.)

The local languages are thus not totally brushed aside and except for the coast and the urban area, they are still widely spoken and competence in them can be very important. (Topan 2008, 263; Legère 2002, 167.) Khamisi (1974, 289 in Legère 2002, 173) wrote already in 1974 that there is most likely big variation between the use of local languages and the use of English and Kiswahili in the remote rural area compared to the urban area or the coast. Also Rubagumya (1990, 9) sees that there are differences in Kiswahili competence and its use depending on gender, generation, level of education and rural-urban division. These divisions most likely hold true still today. Topan (2008, 266) sees that tribalism does not threaten Kiswahili in today’s Tanzania. Intermarriages have become common and the younger generation of Tanzanians is “nowadays so at ease with their national identity and linguistic situation that they also happily acknowledge the ‘ethnic’ origins of their parents’ languages” (ibid, 266).

All in all, the choice for an African, “principal indigenous language<sup>12</sup>” as the national language at

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<sup>12</sup> Due to its origin as creole language with influences from among others Arabic and English, defining Kiswahili as an indigenous African language is not totally unproblematic. Mazrui & Mazrui (1995; 100) define an indigenous African language as “a language whose origins lie on the African continent and whose structure is derived from or

independence and its promotion to the official language in the 1960s has been quite successful at almost all levels of society. (Blommaert 2010, 183-184; Roy-Campbell 1997, 2-3.) Nowadays Kiswahili has tens of millions of speakers and different varieties of it are spoken in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, The Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique. It has the position of official or national language in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and The Democratic Republic of Congo and in the African Union<sup>13</sup>. Most Kiswahili speakers speak the language as an additional language but there is also an increasing number of (mainly) Tanzanians who learn it as their first language. Code-mixing and -switching from other languages while speaking Kiswahili is a very common phenomenon in Tanzania and most likely also in all multilingual countries. (Mwinsheikhe 2003, 132; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998; 76, 131, 160; Roy-Campbell 1990, 76.)

Kiswahili has also been involved in the process of economic integration of the East African countries. It can nowadays be seen as the worst rival of English in Tanzania for example in public life and political processes. (Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 181-182.) In addition, Kiswahili has integrative functions in the East African society: it has enabled social communication and interaction across different divisions of the societies in the different countries. Kiswahili has had a function in creating national consciousness also in Uganda and Kenya, but due to the practical absence of English as the language of the elite, in Tanzania Kiswahili has had a bigger role in the integration of society. (Mazrui & Mazrui 1995; 1,12, 111.)

## **2.4. The education system and its language: historical developments**

The structure of education system in Tanzania is as follows:

- 2 years of pre-primary education
- 7 years of primary education
- 4 years of lower secondary school (Ordinary or O-level)
- 2 years of upper secondary school (Advanced or A-level)
- 3 or more years of tertiary education

In the Tanzanian education system the choice for the language of instruction (LOI) plays a significant role. In the primary school Kiswahili is the LOI and English is taught as a subject. In

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bears affinity to one or more languages associated with Africa”.

<sup>13</sup> Source for the spread and legislation of Kiswahili: Wikipedia article on Kiswahili language..

secondary school English becomes the LOI and Kiswahili a subject. Primary school is free of charge and obligatory for all Tanzanians, but from secondary school onwards there are school fees. (Tanzania Government for Education Website; Brock-Utne 2000, 25-26; Roy-Campbell 1997, 5.)

Jerman (1997, 250) describes how before the colonial times the education of the youth took place in the homestead, where in preparation for adult life the relatives educated the youth in the important aspects of socialization and training. Education was seen as a lifelong process which happened in the local surroundings. Rodney (1972, 242) claims that this pre-colonial African school system was often neglected and left to decline.

According to Rodney (1972, 242), in the German colonial era education was available only in certain parts of the colony, usually around towns and in the cotton and coffee regions where economic activities were performed. Kiswahili was used as LOI throughout the school system in the German period and German language was taught as a subject with no real effort to promote it as LOI. (Rubagumya 1990, 6).

In the British period the use of Kiswahili as LOI was continued for the first five years of primary school and English was a subject from the third year onwards. English became the LOI for the last three years of primary school - this was called the so-called middle school model. (Rubagumya 1990, 7; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 119). Puja (2003, 118) claims that although the British continued the use of Kiswahili as the LOI of primary level, they also actively promoted the use of English as the LOI – as described in 2.3., the British wanted English to become a language of the educated elite. (Topan 2008, 257; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 144; Swilla 1992, 507-508; Mazrui 1975; 55, 15, 137). However, Rodney (1972, 251) claims that in both French and British colonies it were the colonial educators who wanted the education of Africans be more relevant to the context; they themselves suggested the use of local languages as the LOI in primary schools and more education for girls in stead of “white-collar” oriented schooling.

The education of the Tanganyikans who were not needed for work in the colonial administration was left in the hands of the missionary schools. Until 1948, these schools were separate for each tribe and accordingly this meant that the LOI was the language of the tribe in question<sup>14</sup>. Separation

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<sup>14</sup> In African context the term ‘mother tongue education’ refers usually to the use of the local languages of the ethnic groups as the LOI. (More on the definition of the concept mother tongue in Chapter 8.) Due to the dominant position of Kiswahili in Tanzania, the use of the local languages as the LOI has not been under much discussion in the country.

of tribes was continued also in secondary school, although there the LOI was English. Due to all these factors, in British Tanganyika education became the way to achieve social advance in terms of wealth and general well-being in the society. (Jerman 1997, 251-252; Iliffe 1979, 338-339; Rodney 1972, 260.)

Rodney (1972, 262) nevertheless points out that without the efforts of the Africans themselves to access education in the colonial times, the number of educated Africans would have been much smaller. This educated part of the population played a significant role in the independence process and the first president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, is said to have been the first Tanzanian with a university education. In the whole of Africa, opportunities for Africans to study at the university were scarce in the colonial times. The situation in the British colonies was a bit better than in the French ones, though, and in East Africa the University of Makerere in Uganda has already long traditions (Ibid.; 244-245, 262.)

During the period of political decolonisation of the African countries the citizens often started to demand access to education and other social services denied during the colonial period. In the educational reforms one question that needed to be solved was the LOI. In many African countries it was chosen that in the first years of primary school the LOI was a local language, which in the case of Tanzania means the dominant Kiswahili. It was taken for granted that the former colonial language became the language of instruction after the first years. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 1-2.)

The Ujamaa socialist policies introduced in 1967 also included an educational reform. The general aim of the Ujamaa education policies was to make education more relevant for the needs of the Tanzanian society. The use of Kiswahili as the LOI in primary schools was extended to cover the whole 7 years of primary schooling and it was intended, at least in theory, that primary schooling would be complete in itself and not just preparation for secondary schooling. (Brock-Utne 2000, 25; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 2-3.)

As early as 1969 the government anticipated problems in connection to the LOI in the shift from

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Officially the use of the local language in education is prohibited in Tanzania (Petzell 2012, 139) but according to Ström (2013, 40) there are areas in which the children who start primary school have inadequate knowledge of Kiswahili and therefore the teachers might use the local language as the LOI in the beginning

primary to secondary education. It recommended the change of LOI in secondary education and even produced secondary school materials in Kiswahili. Nevertheless, Kiswahili became the LOI in secondary school only for the lessons in political science and Kiswahili. English has remained as the LOI in post-primary education until today. (Topan 2008, 261; Brock-Utne 2000, 25-26; Massamba 1989 & Mulokozi 1991 in Mazrui & Mazrui 1998; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 61-62.)

#### **2.4.1. The LOI discussion**

Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997; v) write that since the mid-1970s there has been critical discussion in Tanzania about the educational standards of school leavers at all levels of education and about the declining level of English knowledge in the country. There have been several studies which have confirmed that when the students do not understand the LOI, English, their performance in studies declines. (Ibid., 3-4.).

Studies in 1978 and 1980 recommended the change of the LOI into Kiswahili in secondary school gradually by 1985 and in tertiary education by 1992. In 1982 the Tanzanian government ordered a study from the British Commission to assess the English competence in Tanzanian schools, and the study revealed that less than 20% of the university sample tested were on a level to find it easy to read even the simpler books needed for their academic studies. (Topan 2008, 261; Mutasa 2003, 198; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997; 17.)

Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 19) describe how despite these results, the recommendation of the British Commission was to continue promoting the use of English with the funds from the British government for The English Language Teaching Support Project (ELTSP). The ELTSP, launched in 1987, is a clear example of how the post-colonial power relations influence the linguistic reality of the former colonies. It can also be seen as part of the Structural Adjustment Policies implemented by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Tanzania like also in many other developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s. (Blommaert 2010; 66, 184; Topan 2008, 263; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998; 199, 203; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997; 19, 104; Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 61-62.)

The Educational Policy of 1997 adopted by Ministry of Education and Culture of Tanzania determined that the LOI of post-primary education would be English. The then Minister of Education publicly announced that English would not be replaced as LOI in secondary schools because Kiswahili is not a fit language for higher levels of education. Despite this statement, a



consultancy team was set up to advise the government in the LOI issues, and it concluded that at the primary level the teaching and learning circumstances were quite satisfactory but at secondary level they were not. These conclusions were nevertheless again neglected in politics. (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2003, 86-87; Kadegehe 2003, 173-174.)

There has been considerable concern about the language skills and learning results on the higher levels of the Tanzanian education system. Already in the 1970s the lecturers at the University of Dar Es Salaam noticed how much the teaching of the language took time from the subject teaching. Soon it was clear that even the Communication Skills Unit (CSU) that established because of the language issues could not address the range of linguistic problems the students had. This was naturally seen also in the academic performance of the students. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 5; Rugemalira 1990, 115.)

The external examiners at the CSU of the University of Dar Es Salaam suggested that there should more time for the CSU studies or a three-months-long intensive English course for the students before they start their studies at the university. Also more study of English in secondary school or a switch to Kiswahili as the LOI were suggested. (Rugemalira 1990, 113.) Puja (2003, 122) refers to S. North's 1985 study concerning the language proficiency of University of Dar Es Salaam students, which revealed that English might be even the fourth language of the students, which can make it difficult to achieve the level of competence needed for university studies.

The University screening test in 1994 tested all the secondary school students who started their university studies. It showed that the measures taken to improve the level of English knowledge and reading competence, like the ELTSP project, had not been successful (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, vi; 105-106). The University of Dar Es Salaam reported in 1999 that most students had problems with LOI and the proficiency level of English was low. As a result of this, the colleges of education and universities were forced to accept students with poor English skills. Often the improvement in the students' English skills during the studies remains small and the students return to working life, for example to schools, with a poor competence of English. The university employees, who due to the middle school LOI system have a good English knowledge, are retiring, and this means that the products of the newer LOI policies have to be employed at the university. This has raised serious concern. (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2003, 86; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 12-13.)

In 2005 was a confrontation between the Tanzanian government and a non-governmental organization (NGO) called Haki Elimu<sup>15</sup> (Right to education) because of the NGO's harsh critique concerning the LOI policies and the education system in general. This led to temporary ban on the activities of the NGO. (Doftori&Takala 2007; 86, 90.) More recently there has been critical discussion in Tanzania about the drop-out-rate and quality of education especially in relation to secondary school. Although there are also other problems in the education system in Tanzania, these problems are most likely also connected to the LOI question.<sup>16</sup>

### **3. Context and data**

In this chapter I describe the context of this study and the data it's based on. I start from a general introduction of tertiary education in Tanzania. Following this I introduce Mwanza and the field of this study, the SAUT university. After reflecting on my role on the campus and as the writer of this thesis I describe my data.

#### **3.1. Universities in Tanzania**

Since the independence process, the number of people enrolled in schools have risen in many African countries. My impression is that in Tanzania this development has been especially strong due to the socialist education policies of the country and the free primary education. The 1996 World Bank figures presented by Prah (2003, 14-15) show a growth of 81% in the percentage for enrolment in primary schools between the years 1960 and 1983, and as much as 370% growth for secondary school enrolment. The quality of the education is nevertheless a hotly debated issue. The literacy rate for Tanzanians in general is 71 % and for those aged between 15 and 24 83% (male) and 76.9% (female). (NBS 2013a, 59-60; LHRC 2013, 117-122; World Bank 2009, 3-4; UN website.)

The estimates vary, but there are about 28 universities in Tanzania, out of which 16-18 are private ones.<sup>17</sup> The number of tertiary level students has grown in Tanzania; the number of students accessing the loan from Higher Education Students' Loan Board has increased from 40 993 in 2006

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<sup>15</sup> See the homepage <http://hakielimu.org/> for more information on the NGO.

<sup>16</sup> For discussion and critique about secondary education in Tanzania, see Posti-Ahokas 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Sources: The website of the city of Mwanza; the website of Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU); the website of SAUT University; NBS 2013a.

to 120 000 in 2009 and 2010. The expansion of students enrolling to higher educations is nevertheless still slow in Tanzania compared to the population size or to the neighbouring country of Kenya. Tanzania also lags behind in the number of higher learning institutions in the Eastern African Community. (LHRC 2011, 133-134, 141-142; World Bank 2009, 4.)

There are many challenges at the Tanzanian universities concerning the rapid increase in the number of students. After the 1995 law allowing private institutions to establish and run universities, private sector and religious institutions have had a big role in increasing the number of higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The challenges of the universities concern, among others, the quality of education and lack of labour force, resources and funding. (LHRC 2013, 123-124; LHRC 2011, 141-142.) The SAUT university, which is run by the catholic church, was established in 1998 and can therefore be seen as an example of this development.

According to Okkolin (2013, 16), in 2006 it was estimated that only 2% of Tanzanians had university education. In other words, the university students of this study are a part of a very small minority in Tanzania.

### **3.2. Contextualizing the campus**

Mwanza is a fast growing city on the shore of lake Victoria in North-Eastern Tanzania. There are about 2,7 million people living in the Mwanza region, making it the second biggest region in Tanzania with 6,4 % of all Tanzanians (NBS 2013b; 1-2, 4, 11). The official estimate of the number of inhabitants in the city of Mwanza is about 600 000-720 000.<sup>18</sup> The growth rate for Mwanza region is 3.0 (NBS 2013b, 2), which means that the city is growing very fast with people from the countryside pouring in with dreams of a better life- the urbanization process of the country is thus also visible in Mwanza<sup>19</sup>.

There has been long-term cooperation between my home city Tampere in Finland and the city of Mwanza<sup>20</sup>, and through this connection also cooperation between the university of Tampere and

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<sup>18</sup> Source: The website of the city of Mwanza, the homepage of the Tampere-Mwanza Local Governance Cooperation Project.

<sup>19</sup> Source: The website of the city of Mwanza, SIDO Mwanza page

<sup>20</sup> For more information about the cooperation see the homepage of the Tampere-Mwanza Local Governance Cooperation Project.

SAUT Universities has been developed. Due to the links between the universities I ended up studying at SAUT in 2010-2011.

The SAUT university campus is located about 10 kilometres from the city centre. It has faculties of social sciences, education, engineering, law and business administration. There are roughly 10 000 students studying at SAUT and it is the biggest private university in Tanzania<sup>21</sup>.

After asking for permission from the head of department of sociology, I conducted my research on Malimbe campus where most sociology and education students have their classes. Malimbe campus area is very green with many trees and flowers, and groups of little cement chairs meant for group work discussions are scattered all around it. When walking around the campus one cannot avoid hearing sounds of teaching from the classrooms. Sometimes the lessons continue up to early evening hours, or then some students might spend the evening in the classrooms in order to study in peace and quiet.

The different buildings around the campus area accommodate classrooms, departments and administrative units. Hostels, different types of halls of residence for students, and other new buildings are constantly being built. When I re-visited the campus in 2012 and 2013, there were many new big buildings in the area. The cafeteria area forms the core of the campus: it is where students take their meals, drink soda, play table tennis or just hang around.

My first impressions in the classroom were more or less chaotic. There were tens and tens of sociology students in the huge classroom, but despite the space all of them seemed to scramble for seats. The amount of student per class (year) was around 200 but even with the new classrooms built on the campus there never seemed to be enough seats.

At the front on the podium there was a lecturer trying to manage the class and in addition to teach. The students, most of them quite young, were all dressed very smartly either in trendy or more traditional clothes and the girls' hairstyles varied a lot. Due to the catholic background of the university, there are also nuns and priests among the students. The students listened to the lecturer more or less keenly, some playing with their mobile phone, birds were flying in and out of the classrooms through the open windows and doors, and in the middle of all this was me, a confused white student.

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<sup>21</sup> Sources: the website of the SAUT University, TCU Website

The starting point of my field work process was that I was, together with three exchange students from Germany, one of the first white-skinned students studying on the SAUT campus. There were several white people living or working on and around the campus area and they were regularly seen for example in the campus cafeteria area, but it was a new phenomenon to see white people in the class as students. As the concept of an exchange student was not generally familiar, many students were asking what it was that we were actually doing there.

Although basically I was just a student studying the same subjects they were, my position was, of course, different from an ordinary student in many ways. Among the concrete differences in my position were that while the Tanzanian students followed all the courses their class was supposed to take that year, I could choose which courses I attended and take courses from all classes, and even from almost any subject. I was also not living in the hostels in which the students usually shared a room with someone, but in my own room with half-board at the university campus guest house where many other foreigners (guest lecturers, other exchange students, international guests, interns and trainees etcetera) lived in. Living there was a conscious choice I made, because I felt that living in the guest house gave me more of my own space to relax and reflect on my experiences. Although the living arrangements separated me from the "normal" students in some ways, I do not think this affected the research process crucially – I think that not all the students necessarily even knew I was living there.

From the first moments on I keenly started to observe the language use on the campus – listening to what the students said, which language they used with whom and what kinds of expressions they used. I was especially interested in the English use of the students, but also because of my goal to learn Kiswahili, I also listened carefully to what the students were saying in Kiswahili.

Due to my background in African and Kiswahili studies and my previous stay in Kenya I had heard and read quite a lot about the roles of Kiswahili and English in Tanzania and East Africa.

Nevertheless, the starting point for this thesis is that I come from a small country, where the national language, Finnish, is used as the language of education from the pre-primary to the doctoral level. I knew that there were many historical and social explanations for the use of English in Tanzania, but the fact that Kiswahili, a much bigger language compared to Finnish, was not used in education apart from the primary level seemed a bit unjust to me. At the same time I became interested in how the Tanzanian students saw the situation.

In other words, the apparent contradiction concerning the language of instruction got me interested in the language use of the students in the first place. Already early on, I started noting down and analysing the expressions I heard and talking to the students about the language use on campus and in Tanzania. In the beginning, I was doing this partially only because of my own interest, but soon I decided the language use on the campus would become the topic of my thesis. As Davies (2008; 5, 8, 30) writes, the choice for the research topic can be based more or less on personal interests and background rather than a theoretical framework.

Picture 1



In this first picture there is the quite recently built university administration block – this building was actually built after my field work on the campus. In the picture the words ‘administration block’ and the logo the name of the university in English.

On the left there is a red advertisement sign of Vodacom phone company with the words

*Supa cheka. Ongea zaidi. Piga \*149\*01#*

= Super laugh. Talk more. Call \*149\*01#

This picture shows the contradiction between the university institution with the Tanzanian reality.

The university and its administration work in English, while phone companies advertise their products in Kiswahili. It should be noted, though, that English is the official language of university administration most likely not only due to the Tanzanian educational legislation but also due to its position as a university of the Catholic Church. Some students commented that the people who work in the university administration also mainly speak Kiswahili with each other.

### 3.3. Mzungu on the campus: reflection on the own position

Reflexivity in social research basically means analysis of the extent the products of research are affected by the research process itself and the people conducting the research. Because of the long-term and complex relationship between the researcher and the researched, reflexivity is an especially central part of ethnographic research. Therefore the whole research process and the reasons for conducting the research on a particular topic should be reflected on as honestly and openly as possible. (Davies 2008; 3-4, 95, 216.)

Through the relationships I formed on the field, I myself as an ethnographer participated in the construction of the observations which comprise this study. This raises the question of who actually produces the information presented in the study? It is important to differentiate the etic-emic -perspective and make it visible: what information can be seen as emic “insider” knowledge and what is based more on my role as etic “outsider”? (Bloome 2012, 25; Giampapa 2012, 96; Davies 2008, 3-5, 8, 264-265.)

In addition, ethical concerns of anthropological research can be accessed through this reflexive approach. Due to the connections of anthropology to global power relations like colonialism and the first world/third world discussion, this is a very important factor in this study. (Davies 2008, 216.)

Several factors concerning my position on SAUT university campus made the research and data collection process anything but neutral. In this chapter try to analyse and reflect on these issues. I start by describing how and why I thought of the research topic and following that I elaborate on my position as an international student on the campus.

I start the deeper analysis of my position through a word which no white-skinned person can not avoid to hearing in Tanzania, the Kiswahili word 'mzungu'. Mzungu is actually much more than just a word and I see it as a central concept in analysing my position on the field.

White-skinned people of European, American or other so-called western origin are commonly called 'mzungu' in Kiswahili (cf. Shaw 1995, 11 or Pietilä 2007, 59-60). The body of the word, –zungu, is derived from the verb '–zunguka', 'to move around (aimlessly)'.<sup>22</sup> Mzungu thus basically

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<sup>22</sup> I thank Lotta Aunio, Lecturer of Bantu languages at the University of Helsinki, for confirming this connection to



means a person who moves around, but other translations for *mzungu* are 'a smart person' or 'a trick' - the actual meaning of the word is defined by the social context it is used in. It is very typical of Kiswahili that words have many meanings and translations.

Through the verb *-zunguka*, it is possible to see the connection of *mzungu* to colonialism and white people's role in it. The importance of the (colonial) past for the definition of *mzungu* is discussed by Katja Uusihakala (1995; 26,41, 43). As we all know, the consequences of this “moving around” of the *wazungu* (plural for *mzungu*) have been enormous for Africa both on the local and on the wider global level.

It is common that the people on the streets, shopkeepers or children shout “*mzungu*, come here” or something alike when they see a *mzungu* walking on the street. According to my own analysis these shouts imply general interest and curiosity towards the *wazungu*, but in addition they reflect the fact that *wazungu* are connected to many positive things from resources and money to superstitious thinking concerning, among others, general good luck. In practice *wazungu* are often seen as potential trading partners and customers (cf. Mkangi 2008, 225 and Pietilä 2007, 58-60).

How the word *mzungu* can also be used in relation to black skin is a good example of the meaning of the word. James R. Brennan (2012, 174) describes how the words 'black *mzungu*' are written on the side of the *daladala* minibuses, the main public transport vehicles in Tanzania known for their colourful writings and decorations. Brennan analyses that a 'black *mzungu*' refers to a black-skinned Tanzanian, who enjoys a more or less “easy” and prosperous life, like that of a *mzungu* – has a white mind under the black skin.

As Uusihakala (1995, 44-46) writes, *mzungu* is also used as a self-referential concept by the *wazungu* themselves. Although I dislike the whole *mzungu* issue, I have noticed that occasionally I find also myself using the concept of *mzungu*. I use the word in an ironic sense, when I want to point out not only the skin colour but the position of white people in general. I use the word particularly when referring to white people who act in a way which shows that they are newcomers to Tanzania and/or Africa. According to Uusihakala (1995, 44-46), this self-referential use of *mzungu* shows how important experience of and relation to 'the other' is for the creation of the *mzungu* identity. The *wazungu* exist only through the differentiation, which the *wazungu* also make themselves.

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me.

Mzungu is also related to the connections between colonial history and anthropology. The early ethnographic descriptions of the “exotic” others provided, among others, by Bronislaw Malinowski and Alfred Radcliffe-Brown have strong colonial connotations, and due to these social and historical connections the whole process of ‘doing ethnography’ can be considered as problematic. (Mkangi 2008, 217; Davies 2008; ix, 3, 77, 79, 194.) This historical perspective cannot be neglected when conducting research in a setting as ‘colonial’ as mine – my study is almost stereotypically researching the exotic ‘other’ in a far-away place. But as Mikko Lehtonen (1991, 197) writes, in order for a human being to exist, the existence of ‘the other’ is needed and in almost any kind of research, the starting point is that we are researching something outside ourselves, some ‘other.’

All in all, my skin colour brought many differentiations and assumptions in my every encounter with a Tanzanian. Although white skin could also cause some practical issues, most of which were concerned safety, most issues related to my skin were in the form of some sort of expectations. These ideas connected with the wazungu were naturally also visible on the campus and affected the interaction between myself and my informants. Most often they were concretised in the form of a modest question or expectation of a favour or information. I want to point out this issue, because it has been present during the whole research process.

### **3.4. The language and the study: myself as the writer of this thesis**

Before proceeding, a couple of issues regarding language competence and language use need to be discussed. These issues are present visible throughout the thesis and therefore need to be made visible.

My position as a foreigner and the predominant use of English in the data collection process has most likely influenced the research process and the analysis to some extent. This is because both the students and I expressed themselves during the interview in a foreign language to a foreigner who represented a foreign context. I see this more as an enriching factor than a limitation that makes the communication more interesting than as limitation.

Muriel Saville-Troike (1989, 21) writes about the relevance of possible differences in the general communicative competence skills of the participants in the interview situations. With this she refers to the way people with different statuses and roles speak to each other and how information is asked

for and received. In this case, although basically the students and I were all just equal students at the university, my status and role was quite different from the students I interviewed. I tried to make the interview situations as informal as possible, but it can be that the students did not express themselves as openly as they would have in other situations. It has to be noted, though, that just like many other Tanzanians, several students wanted to speak English with me, maybe in order to get practice of using the language. The choice for the language also came from their side.

Doing research involves linguistic activity from the researcher as well. English, Kiswahili and Finnish talk produced by myself are relevant to and visible in the whole research process. Kirsi Juhila (1999, 201) writes that the position of the researcher is a linguistically produced category and its elements are found for example in the live encounters and written reports about the research. The questions I asked and how I asked them influenced the students' answers. At the moment of writing, my own skills and background influences how I write about the students.

It is important to point out that I should not be described as a person who knows how to speak “proper” English in contrast to my informants. For me English is also a foreign language which I have studied during my primary and secondary schooling. English was the first foreign language I started to learn at school when I was nine years old. I always liked English as subject and in addition, I have had opportunities to travel and speak English with natives and non-natives. As a conclusion I would say that I have learned English through practice rather than studying it at school.

Choosing English as the language of my thesis might seem a bit illogical in view of my research topic, which can be seen as some kind of analysis of and critique towards the use of English in (higher) education. The choice for English in a way represents the same phenomenon that is being studied. I myself see it more as something making the use of English my thesis even more interesting, at least on the level of the process.

The reasons for writing my thesis in English are transparency and usefulness. I could have written in Finnish, but I think it is fair that the people I have studied are able to read what I have written about them. As was written in 1.1, multilingualism as a research topic is increasingly important in the whole world and by writing this thesis in English, this study becomes available also to the non-Finnish audience.

### **3.5. The data**

I was “on field” on the SAUT campus for 7 months and concentrated on the data collection mainly during the last 2-3 months. I used three methods when collecting the data on the field at the campus: interviews, participant observation and questionnaires with mostly open-ended questions. In this chapter I describe the data and the process of collecting it.

I asked for permission to conduct my research on the campus from the head of the department of sociology. I have disclosed as little information as possible concerning the identity of the students in my data, although I want to give the reader some information of what kind of student is talking now (the subject of study, age and sex). Most likely the interviewed students themselves have the best possibility to recognize themselves in the accounts I have given about their life experiences. Most of the students in the data have already graduated and moved on to further studies or to working life. Therefore it is not easy to track them anymore.

#### **3.5.1. Participant observation**

I will start by describing the main method in anthropology, participant observation, in its traditional form:

“In its classic form participant observation consists of a single researcher spending an extended period of time (usually at least a year) living among the people he or she is studying, participating in their daily lives in order to gain as complete an understanding as possible of the cultural meanings and social structures of the group and how these are interrelated.” (Davies 2008, 77.)

The field of my study, a place far away, more or less conforms to this “classic” definition of the field. Laura Huttunen (2010, 39) and Davies (2008, 43) describe how the concept of field is nowadays not necessarily a place with territorial boundaries. The field can still be a place far away or nearby, but it can also be a social phenomenon.

In addition, it has to be remembered that other places can have an influence on the field studied. In this study, both the language use on the campus in general and the relationships between the students and myself were influenced by other fields. The reference to other places was naturally most concrete in the choice of the language: speaking different languages located the student and

me differently. As a conclusion, it can be said that local and global influences are so mixed in the contemporary world that it is almost impossible to avoid the influence of other fields or phenomena on one's own field (Huttunen 2011, 39-40; Rastas 2010, 65-66).

I recorded the linguistic expressions and situations I witnessed in the class and although it was not always in the form of a concrete, “real” field diary, I have a sufficient amount of data collected this way. A practical way of “writing the diary” was to write my observations into draft text messages or other notes in my mobile phone, as I noticed that the use of the mobile phone was socially accepted in almost any situation in Tanzania. Observations were also made outside the classroom: listening to the kind of language the students used in their discussions and analysing all kinds of materials available produced by the students in English (essays, notes, messages on the notice boards at the university campus, the language used in sms messages and so on).

Also off-campus life gave me plenty of ideas about the language use in different situations in the Tanzanian society and in the Mwanza area. As my Kiswahili was improving all the time, my ability to understand the linguistic situations became better: not only was I able to spot more of the typical influences of Kiswahili on the English language, I could also to better understand the kind of mixed language the students were using. As Huttunen (2011, 43-44) writes, it is important to compare and combine the data acquired through different methods. In this way it is possible to form the kind of holistic picture ethnographic study is aiming at (the ‘thick description’ described by Geertz, 1973). The participant observation proved to be interesting when compared to what the students said in the interviews and questionnaires. It enabled comparing the etic view of practice with the emic description of the students.

That the time-span of this study being quite long is typical of ethnographic research (Huttunen 2011 46-47). In addition, I continued the observation of the language use when I returned to Tanzania in 2012 for an internship in Dar Es Salaam. Although the environment was very different from the campus, I observed how the Tanzanians used languages, how they spoke about the different languages they used, and followed the public discussion in the media concerning languages. I shortly visited the SAUT Malimbe campus in the summer of 2012, and in January 2013 I spent a couple of days there to observe keeping the research questions more clearly in mind. In 2013 I was allowed to attend a couple of lectures for sociology students and otherwise I was just hanging around on the campus, talking to students in the cafeteria and observing the language use in general. These re-visits to the research site and to the country in general gave me new ideas for and insight

into my thesis, and in the end they proved to be quite fruitful.

### **3.5.2. Interviews**

I interviewed 9 people for my thesis. I used a semi-structural interview form and prepared questions on some themes for the interviews, intending to be flexible and to see how the discussion would develop during the interview. My hope was that the students would experience the interview situations like I did – as informal, free flow and construction of information. The interviews were clearly the best way to access the emic experience of the students: to find out how the students experienced the linguistic situation at the campus, what they thought about it and how they talked about it – in short: get a glimpse of their point of view.

I interviewed 6 students from the department of sociology and 3 students from the department of education. Some students only knew Kiswahili and English, but others up to five different languages, a couple also knew some languages from other African countries. Everybody I asked was willing to be interviewed.

The only problem in getting enough informants for the interviews came through my goal of achieving gender balance. The percentage of females among university students is lower (around 30-35 % compared with 65-70% of male students<sup>23</sup>). General experience in Tanzania and my internship of 2012 in a non-governmental organization working with political participation of women in Tanzania have showed me that women generally have a somewhat weaker position in the Tanzanian society generally. It is traditionally considered inappropriate for a woman to project herself strongly. I share the same experiences with many of my acquaintances: it is much easier to get to know Tanzanian men than Tanzanian women. Women often seem quite shy and men tend to socialize more actively.

I do not want to give the impression that all Tanzanian women are oppressed or unsure of themselves. Most likely women who get the chance to study at the university are more confident than women living in the rural villages practising traditional ways of life. Nevertheless I see that this gender issue is visible on the SAUT campus and in my data, because I knew fewer women than men on the campus. In the end I conducted the interview with 5 male and 4 female students. Being one female short was due to lack of time and energy to search for the missing one through my

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<sup>23</sup> Sources: NBS 2013a, 60; Website of TCU, Tanzania Government Website for Education.

networks, nevertheless I'm happy the gender balance in my data is quite even.<sup>24</sup> I even had to politely refuse to interview some male students eager to be a part of my research.

The male students I interviewed were generally a bit older than the females (males 22 to 30 years versus females 21 to 23 years). This does not necessarily represent the average age of the male students on the campus and might be connected, for example, to confidence issues – maybe older men have more confidence to be interviewed by a young mzungu woman? Although the gender issues do not affect the results of this study, I want to make clear that the topic was a relevant feature of the data collection process.

I had talked about the language issues with few of the students I interviewed before actually conducting the interview or even deciding what I would precisely be researching. I didn't document what themes I discussed with which students in advance and therefore I consider these chats more as a part of general observation than interviewing. As Rastas (2010, 67-68) writes, in ethnographic research it is not necessary to leave out data collected outside the "official" interviews, but it is important to be open about the different ways of producing the data.

Davies (2008, 55) writes that the research theme and the questions need to be presented to the participants in a way that makes the topic meaningful and comprehensible for them. In my case, due to the meaningful role of the Kiswahili language in the Tanzanian society and the public debate about the LOI question many of my informants were conscious of the issue of language use and language policies in Tanzania. Although there were a couple of informants who saw the linguistic situation as somehow self-evident and therefore not so interesting, for many students the topic was not totally new and it was easy to make the informants interested in it.

The main themes discussed in the interviews were related to the different languages the interviewed student speaks and to where and when they were learned and used. After this there was general discussion about the languages in Tanzania and especially the role of English. The student's educational background was discussed as well, as the use of languages in the education system in Tanzania. Due I also asked the students what they thought, why is it a general assumption in Tanzania was that Kenyans were usually considered better English speakers than Tanzanians. The comparison to the English skills of the Kenyans is a generally known issue in Tanzania and I

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<sup>24</sup> For gender issues in African universities see Karani 2008, 90-91. For gender issues in Tanzanian education system incl. university see Okkolin 2013.

wanted to hear the students' comments on it. The difference in competence question is most likely linked to the somewhat different position of English in Kenya in general and to the different LOI approach in the Kenyan education system, in which English is used as the LOI already in primary school. According to Schiend (1990, 124), in Kenya the domains for using English as well as the local languages are wider than in Tanzania.

The people I interviewed were selected on a quite randomly, based on the network of people I knew. This network was, of course, not neutral, as it consisted of people who had the language skills and interest in getting to know the *mzungu* student or some of her *mzungu* friends, all among the first *mzungu* students on the campus. Many of the interviewees were somehow active on the class level, for example as the spokesperson of their respective groups<sup>25</sup>. This needs to be kept in mind when making any conclusions based on the data.

The level of closeness between the informant and myself was not always noticeable in the interviews: sometimes the discussion went quite deep although we did not know each other very well and also the other way around. I started the interviews with the people I knew better and some of my best informants were also some of my best friends during my stay in Mwanza. They can be seen as my key informants - these are "individuals, who for various reasons are either very effective in relating cultural practices or simply more willing than most to take the time to do so" (Davies 2008, 81). Ethnographers almost always develop key informants because it is impossible to observe and see everything of interest (Davies 2008, 81). Especially the female students I interviewed I did not know as well as the males and I did not one of them know at all – although we had been sitting in the same class the whole semester and she knew very well who I was. This reflects my position as one of the first *mzungu* students on the campus: everybody noticed me but I was unable to memorize all the new faces.

Except for the first interview, which was done in a restaurant while spending an evening with a friend, the venue of the interviews was in a more or less peaceful spot somewhere around the campus area. The first question was almost inevitably what language we were going to use, although I knew my Kiswahili was not good enough for completing the interview in Kiswahili. Some interviews we started in Kiswahili, and in one we spoke Kiswahili almost throughout the whole interview, but most interviews were conducted mainly in English. The language could change

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<sup>25</sup> All the classes were divided into groups of 5-10 people, and the group members studied and did group assignments together.



in the flow of the interview. After each interview I reflected on the situation and my feelings in written form.

Not only did my background influence on what kind of questions I had in mind about the linguistic situation, but of course also the way the students spoke and behaved in the interviews. Because the interviews were not conducted until after almost a six-month-long period of participant observation, I do not think I was totally unaware of the social roles and cultural meanings which affected the situation (Davies 2008, 119). With the hope that the students would understand better why I was interested in the topic, in many interviews I explained my background and the situation in Finland. Some students also inquired about my opinions and views of the situation concerning the language of education in Tanzania and why I had chosen the topic for my thesis. When listening to the interviews later on I spotted how many of my formulations in the practical situation quite clearly reflected the way I felt about the theme.

Ann Oakley (1981, in Davies 2008, 113) finds that for ethical reasons and the efficacy of the interview, the interviewers should share their views and opinions, their own knowledge, with the interviewee. This is in contrast to the traditional view of the interview situation, in which the setting is that the ones interviewed have access knowledge and they share this knowledge with the researcher when asked to do so. The interviewee is thus traditionally seen as a representative of social and cultural realities and the researcher directs the talk to the topics of interest and tries not to influence the narrative by staying as neutral as possible. But it is not easy for the discussion to flow freely, if one of the participants (the interviewer) does not express any opinions – that is also one reason I explained my point of view. (Davies 2008, 107.)

I consider it as advantage in the interviews that I was “just a student” among other students, because this possibly made the SAUT students feel easier in the interview. Davies (2008, 111) writes that shared social status, like for example gender, does not necessarily presume equal understanding or openness and naturally my situation and position was not the same as that of the Tanzanian students. Nevertheless, these common background factors hopefully made the interview somewhat alike the ideal form of an ethnographic interview, that it is a “joint exploration of the topic” (Davies 2008, 121). This means that in an ideal situation, the knowledge provided in the interview situation is constructed together in the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. This might have been true in some interviews more than in others, depending on the flow of the discussion. (Davies 2008, 104, 106-107; Holstein & Gubrium 1995, 4 in Davies 2008, 108-109.)

Ilkka Pietilä (2010, 415-416) writes that if the participants in an interview situation are not from the same country, they are inevitably both representing their own culture and country. There is a built-in aspect of comparison in the situation and the different living or other conditions easily become one topic of the discussion. According to Pietilä (2010, 415-416), this can be a good thing, as often things are explained more thoroughly to a foreigner, and this may result in the informant analysing issues that might be considered as self-evident truisms with an interviewer from the same culture. In this study these differences appeared more positive than negative, because the students needed to explain many issues to me as a foreigner and this made the students reflect on the issues in an open way.

The informants have a very powerful position in the interview situation, because they control access to the community. Talking to a foreigner can lead to defending or sugar-coating issues or showing the reality to the researcher in the way desired. My informants determined how I was allowed to know about the situation in Tanzania and their lives. They, for example, could have given me only the official version of how things were. This is why issues of power, positioning, representation and identity between the informant and researcher need to be analysed critically. (Giampapa 2012, 95; Pietilä 2010, 415-416; Davies 2008, 97.)

As Davies (2008, 107) writes, the representations of reality the informants offered to me might include contradictions. It was interesting that in the interviews most students said that they themselves do not have problems with English as LOI at the university, but that other students did face difficulties. Although there were students who said that they did have difficulties because of the LOI, I might have asked questions about the personal situation too directly. It might have been better to start by asking what they think were problems because of the LOI on the campus in general. Either way, these answers need to be seen in connection to data acquired through other methods, especially through participant observation.

Before starting the interviews with the students, I wanted to interview the English teachers of the university. All the students have one obligatory course in English and I was interested to know the teachers' impressions concerning the attitudes towards English and if there were problems that were common for the students. I found the teachers by walking into the department of education (including languages) and asking around. They were very friendly and I had an interesting and informative conversation with them. We discussed the general English knowledge of the students,

the attitudes of the students towards English and if they felt the study language affected the students' study performance. An interesting thing about the teachers was that they both of them were Kenyan – as discussed above Kenyans are usually considered better speakers of English than Tanzanians. In the course of the thesis, I refer to the teachers' comments in the relevant spots.

### **3.5.3. Questionnaires**

When writing the first draft of my research plan for the course on research methodology I attended at the SAUT, I was obliged to compile a questionnaire as an appendix for the research proposal. I decided to distribute some questionnaires through my networks, as I thought that maybe they could provide me with something to rely on in my assumptions about the linguistic background of the students (like is Kiswahili really usually the L1 for most of the students and the language they know best).

In the early days of anthropological research, questionnaires were the main method for observation. In those days the approach to their use was rather comparative and based on the model from the natural sciences. Nowadays ethnographers do usually not trust questionnaires, because the questions in them can be interpreted differently from what is meant depending on the environment in question (Davies 2008; 78,175.)

Except for the first questions about the linguistic competence and study background of the respondent, the questions in my questionnaire are open-ended. I do not use the questionnaires in any quantitative sense, but consider them more as texts produced by the students about the topic of my thesis. As Davies (2008, 276) writes the knowledge attained through questionnaires is made meaningful and useful in reflexive discussion with other information sources of the ethnographer.

Just like the interviews, also the questionnaires were formulated after 6 months of participant observation. This helped me to formulate the questions in a way that would make the informants understand them as they were meant to be understood. The questionnaires are formulated both in English and Kiswahili (see Appendix) and in the process of translating them with my Kiswahili teacher we discussed and reflected on the questionnaire questions in both languages. In stead of increasing the chances for misinterpretation (Ibid, 175), in this case the translation might have worked in an opposite way.

Through the questionnaires I was able to get a vague idea of the numbers and types of languages the students at the campus used in their lives. The answers to the questionnaires questions support my assumption of the rivalry of English and Kiswahili in the lives of the students, but there are also surprising answers. To my knowledge no statistics about the linguistic or ethnic backgrounds of the SAUT students is available, therefore I am pleased that I can back up my observations with at least something.

When looking for people to fill in my questionnaires, I used roughly the same method as for my interviews: I sent a message to more or less all the numbers of students I had on my mobile phone, asking if the person could help me by filling in the questionnaire. I asked a couple of friends to send messages, too. The amount of responses surprised me and I actually gave out more than 50 questionnaires. A bigger problem was how to get them back, but I am very thankful to the individuals who asked their friends to fill in the questionnaires and brought the papers back to me once completed. As expected, I lost quite a big percentage of the questionnaires I dealt out, but I am very happy with the 33 I got back.

Many of the open-ended answers clearly carefully contemplated, making the questionnaires surprisingly interesting for my analysis. These exceptional or unexpected answers show that the students did not reply only according to what they thought they were "expected" to answer – a threat for data collection in general but especially for questionnaires (cf. Davies 2008, 175-176 and Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 44).

Of the 33 questionnaires returned, 16 are answered by a male and 17 by a female student. 20 questionnaires are in English and 13 in Kiswahili; in addition there are answers in a language other than the language of the questions (questions in Kiswahili and answers in English and the other way around). Also in the questionnaires the female respondents were clearly on the average younger than the males, the age varying from 21 to 26 with the average being age of 21 years old. The men were between 22 and 41 years old and half of them were older than 30 years old. (The age difference between the genders is connected to the issues discussed in 3.5.2.)

Of the questionnaires returned 17 respondents studied sociology and 11 education (literature, linguistics, languages). There was also one student studying mass communication studies and one public relations, although I advised the people helping me with the questionnaires to ask only sociology or education students to participate. The students of sociology were from all classes and

education students were second and third year students. There were also a couple of odd cases, who did not mention their year of study or major subject – the latter possibly because the term I used in the questionnaire for asking their study subject, ‘major subject,’ is not a term commonly used in Tanzania. 10 students had participated in some kind of certificate studies before starting their university studies (most in education, but also computer studies and journalism were mentioned).

## **4. Theoretical framework**

In this chapter I describe the methods I have used for analysing the data. I will also introduce theoretical concepts which I am going to use as a tool in the analysis.

### **4.1. The analysis of the data**

I started the analysis of the data by going through the data by analysing the data thematically. After this preliminary analysis, I divided the themes into abstract and concrete ones. I used what Jouni Tuomi and Anneli Sarajärvi (2002, 115) call data-based content analysis: the interpretation of the empiric data forms the basis for interpretation on a more abstract, conceptual level. Data-based content analysis aims at seeing the situation from the viewpoint of the researched, reaching the emic viewpoint, and therefore it is very suitable for ethnographic research like mine.

Early on in the analysis I noticed how the students quite clearly connected each language to certain domains or fields of use. Only the language of education was connected to two languages, Kiswahili and English. Because of this I divided the analysis into Kiswahili, English and the local languages, but have separated the language of education into its own section – this seemed to be the right choice also due to the educational setting of the thesis. But despite this seeming division of languages into their own domains, the languages are actually more defined by the linguistic practices the students have formed. This separation into domains enables seeing the linguistic practices of the students in their actual form.

In the analysis process I have analysed the practical language use of the students, the language choices the students have made in their lives and the interpretations and explanations they give about language use in their own life, in Tanzania and in the world. I was inspired by discourse analytic literature and especially the writings of Kirsi Juhila and Eero Suoninen (1999). During the analysis

process I pondered the questions of how and of why is a language used and talked about (Juhila & Suoninen, 1999, 248). I asked to what kind of culturally established understandings the subjective experiences communicated through language use might refer to (Juhila 1999, 174). I also looked into the ideological and societal consequences of the students' language use and for example the possible otherness or divisions reflected in the language use (Juhila & Suoninen 1999, 233).

Reflecting on questions like these I have tried to find out what kind of social and symbolic meanings the students give to the languages and what kind of connections these meanings have to Tanzanian society and culture.

#### **4.2. The practices of the habitus in this thesis**

As practical tools in the analysis concerning the meanings the students give to different languages I use the concepts of habitus and practice by Pierre Bourdieu. In the text to follow I define Bourdieu's concepts in the sense I understand them. As William F. Hanks (2005, 68) writes, there are no fixed definitions for the terms developed by Bourdieu. This is because the terms are always related to the work they do in analysis – they are not based on fixed objects but are rather continuously constructed and reflected. This can be seen as a reflection of the post-structuralist nature of Bourdieu's work. (Hanks, 2005, 68.)

The notion of habitus was first used by Pierre Bourdieu in the 1960s as a reference to the basic perceptions of a human agent about the self and the society - thoughts, feelings, tastes and bodily postures (Bourdieu 1977, 409). Habitus represents the common understanding and meaning of the world in the society in question. The habitus is the result of negotiation between the social, objective and the personal, subjective conditions or structures, and it is influenced by the past and the present. The most influential factors for the formation of habitus are more or less unconscious everyday situations and practices. Habitus is a useful tool in describing and explaining what kind of social and personal factors are behind an individual's actions in certain situations and how one makes choices. It is important to note that these terms should be seen in connection to Bourdieu's rejection of the structural thinking of the classic anthropologist like Claude Lévi-Strauss. Lévi-Strauss ignored the role of the agent in favour of the structure and saw society somehow outside the individual. (Rowell 2012, 117-118; Bourdieu 1977, 409-410; Moore & Sanders 2006, 12; Hanks 2005, 69; Reed-Danahy 2004, 105-107, Thompson 1991; 12-13, 17.)

John B. Thompson (1991, 12) explains that habitus is a very old concept with Aristotelian origins. Deborah Reed-Danahay (2004, 104-107) describes how in the social sciences, before Bourdieu the term was already used by other theorists. Most prominently habitus has been used by Marcel Mauss and Norbert Elias. For Elias habitus meant a certain way of understanding the relation between the individual and the social - habitus was a kind of personality structure of the individual, although Elias' also saw the social side of the habitus. Elias' influence on Bourdieu's thinking can be seen in the discussion concerning power struggles of different groups in the society. Marcel Mauss connected the concept of habitus to dispositions as socially constructed, customary ways of moving the body, which differ in different societies. His use of the concept concentrated on the physical manifestation of the habitus and in his early works also Bourdieu connected habitus with bodily dispositions. (Ibid., 2004, 104-107.)

Pierre Bourdieu also talks about the 'linguistic habitus'. He defines the term 'linguistic habitus' as the capacity to speak in general and the tendency to speak and say certain things. It includes both the linguistic and social capacities of a person to use the linguistic competences at one's disposal. (Bourdieu 1991, 37.) The linguistic habitus correlates with the speaker's habits to use language in a certain way, to use it in the social environment in question and to embody the linguistic expression with gestures or postures. The embodied schemes and dispositions of people are actualized in speech and these, rather than rules or codes, explain the regularities of language use. (Greenfield 2012b, 67; Hanks 2005, 69-70; 72.) According to Michael Grenfell (2012, 68), Bourdieu's linguistic habitus concretises the relation between the individual and the social, and defines the linguistic capacity of the individual as socially valuable.

The habitus is inseparably connected with two other concepts by Bourdieu, the field and the practice. The habitus emerges in interaction between individuals with a certain habitus, the agents<sup>26</sup>, and the field. A field is a form of social organization which consists of objective relations and positions between the different agents acting in the field. The field is the practical, empirical context in which the study takes place. The social, economic or cultural power and capital of the individual agents, for example in the form of language skills, define the positions of the agent in the field. The

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<sup>26</sup> The concept of agency is often not so clearly defined. A definition offered by Alessandro Duranti (2004, 453 in Block 2012, 48): "Agency is here defined as the property of those entities (I) that have some degree of control over their own behaviour (ii) whose actions in the world affect other entities' (and sometimes their own) and (iii) whose actions are the object of evaluation e.g. in terms of their responsibility for a given outcome."

historical processes behind these positions and structures define the fields. (Bourdieu 1991; 230-231, 242; Hanks 2005, 72.)

The agents with a certain habitus produce practices: practical estimates which develop in interaction with each other in the different fields they are operating. Bourdieu (1977, 407-411) describes these practices as sort of strategies of action without conscious intention. They are not calculations of probabilities but more like practical evaluations of the likelihood for a certain action to success in a given situation. Practices offer practical strategies for action in new and changing situations. Practices are to some extent always products of linguistic or cultural structures and competences, which are needed in the interaction of the agents. (Ibid., 407-411.)

I intend to use Bourdieu's concepts in analysing the common ingredients in the talk of the students. I use these concepts because they enable bringing out the similarities among the students as well as the individual or exceptional situations and choices. Habitus functions well for understanding the common meanings repeating themselves in the talk of the students. In comparison to the concept of domain, the concept of practice offers the flexibility needed for in understanding the students' actual language use: how they choose a language in certain situations, who they talk to in a certain language and what is behind changing or mixing of languages. Analysing the linguistic habitus and linguistic practices offer a way to form a holistic picture of the multilingual field the students are operating in. I do not intend to define the (linguistic) habitus or the (linguistic) practices of the students, but will rather describe the features in the talk of the students that can be seen as a reflection of what Bourdieu called the linguistic habitus or the linguistic practice.

The way how the concepts of habitus and practice lend themselves to this study will be shown in the course of the analysis; I again refer to Hanks (2005, 68): "Bourdieu's concepts are defined through their role in the analysis".

## **5. The symbol of the state**

This chapter looks into what kind of meanings Kiswahili has for the students. I connect these meanings to the state and Kiswahili's role in the society as well as to the personal situation of the students. I also discuss the concept of habitus and describe the practices of code-mixing with respect to Kiswahili.



### 5.1. “Because I’m a Tanzanian”

The descriptions the students gave about the use of Kiswahili concretise that the language has spread into all areas of life and all domains of language use. The students see Kiswahili as the language used at home, at school and at work; both in everyday circumstances and in also in more official, administrative situations. Also the historical and societal developments of Tanzania concerning the symbolic position of Kiswahili become very evident from the data: the students very concretely described Kiswahili as the symbol of the Tanzanian nation. They seemed to be very conscious of the role of Kiswahili for the national identity and its importance for uniting Tanzania.

In general the students talked about Kiswahili in a very positive light and it seems that it can be used in any field or domain of language use. The students saw that Kiswahili represents Tanzania, that it preserves and promotes Tanzanian culture and gives Tanzanians prestige. As Geertz (1973; 12, 45-46) and Lehtonen (1996, 18-19) write, there are certain “given” social and public symbols and meanings in all societies and cultures, and individuals encounter these when they are born. The generation of the SAUT students has grown up in the Tanzanian society and has learned the cultural meaning of Kiswahili. They conform to the social consensus concerning the socio-linguistic reality of the country and the symbolic role Kiswahili has in it.

The following quote from an interview with a 23- year old male sociology student describes the position of the Kiswahili language in the Tanzanian society quite aptly.

I: *What’s your ethnic background, like what tribe are you?*

S: *No-*

I: *Or are you mix?*

S: *No, no I’m not used to speak even vernacular languages, because I never get a chance to live with my grandparents. So ethnically I’ll be, a little bit confused if I tell you I used to speak vernacular language so. Because I’m a Tanzanian, I just speak Kiswahili.*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> As Pirjo Nikander (2010; 432-434, 439-440) analyzes, transcribing is always making choices of how to present the talk of the informant and I have chosen to transcribe everything as precisely as possible. All quotes from the students are transcribed exactly in the form the informants expressed them – or how I heard them. I have chosen not to correct the possible language mistakes I think I hear unless they have an effect on the interpretation I am making. The quotes from the questionnaires are copied exactly like they are written in the forms. I have chosen this style although it might mean representing the students using somehow “strange” or “exotic” English because I want the reader to hear the

The first and most obvious point in this quote is that the student immediately connects ethnicity to the knowledge of languages, and the Kiswahili language to the Tanzanian national identity<sup>28</sup>. This might be because he knew the topic of the interview and my interest in languages in Tanzanian society. He might also have wanted to give a certain picture of the linguistic situation in Tanzania to a foreigner and therefore emphasized this aspect.

But whatever the case, it is clear that language has been made into an important symbol in the Tanzanian society. It seems that the choice for using or not using a language is not neutral and for this student not knowing the local language seems to be a strong signal in favour of the Tanzanian unity. My impression is that the student wants to highlight that he is a proper Tanzanian, to whom the “vernacular language” means nothing; that he is an example of the ideal Tanzanian, who neglects the tribal background in favour of national identity.

This student, like many other Tanzanians, is very aware of the historical and societal role of Kiswahili. He seems to find that Kiswahili is the language any Tanzanian, who is aware of the importance of national unity, should use. Many students in my data expressed how proud they were of Kiswahili and some even described themselves as patriots. As Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 185) write, Kiswahili gives Tanzania's national identity “a true expression and fulfilment.”

The students' expressions concerning the symbolic position of Kiswahili make its dominance and power in the Tanzanian society almost tangible. As Bourdieu (1991, 167) writes, speaking the language and speaking about the language in a certain way makes people see and believe in its dominance. Through their language choices the students themselves are in a way involved in the construction and confirmation of the symbolic position of Kiswahili. Because symbolic power is invisible, even the ones who do not want to know they are subject to it, sustain and even exercise the power relations (Bourdieu 1991, 164). The students thus confirm the reality they are living in through speaking about Kiswahili's symbolic position and using the language like it is supposed to be used.

This is an example how linguistic ideologies in a society can influence the linguistic practices performed by individuals. Both Alessandro Duranti (1997, 11) and Blackledge and Creese (2010,

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students like I heard them. This hopefully makes the interpretation and analysis more transparent and reliable.

<sup>28</sup> See 8.3 for discussion concerning the connection of ethnicity and knowledge of language.

56) argue that talk is not just representation of the reality outside the language but it also produces the reality in a certain way. Blackledge and Creese (2010, 56) continue that through this role language can function as media for ideologies of the dominant powers in the society. Kiswahili thus has a vital role in creating a certain, ideological picture of the Tanzanian society for the students.

Roy-Campbell (1990, 76) writes that in multilingual communities the different communicative functions of the languages are central for individuals. One concrete example of the dominant position of Kiswahili is the role the students give to it as a medium of communication in Tanzania. Many students mention communication among the citizens as a practical reason for the importance of Kiswahili. The students say that without Kiswahili communication and getting services would not be possible in Tanzania and that Kiswahili also helps to keep in touch with relatives.

This communicative role the students give to Kiswahili is important, because as both Bourdieu (1991; 37, 167) and Blackledge & Creese (2012, 90) claim, language of communication is always connected to the relations of power in the society. Bordieu (1991, 37) sees linguistic exchanges as the main form of relations of communication, which he considers as relations of symbolic power. The power positions of the communicators are actualized through the choice of the medium, the language of communication. This is how symbolic systems, like that of Kiswahili, fulfil their political, socialist function and show the political function of the language (Ibid.; 37, 166-167).

In addition to communication, the students also comment on Kiswahili's role for the integration of the society: Kiswahili is described as a factor joining Tanzanians together regardless of differences in terms of religion, tribe, status, region or education. Kiswahili connects people with different social statuses:

*Kiswahili helps us to speak with different people literate or illiterate.*

(female, 23, sociology)

Also Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 190; 1995, 144-145) have written that Kiswahili has increased social mobility between the elite, masses and ethnic groups; through its symbolic position Kiswahili has thus increased social order and integration in Tanzania. Expressed in Bourdieu's (1991, 166-167) terms, speaking Kiswahili equalizes the power positions between the speakers as they are all Tanzanians communicating in Kiswahili. Communication in Kiswahili thus re-confirms the common understanding of the social world and through that contributes to the reproduction of the social order (Ibid., 166-167).

The talk about the national importance of Kiswahili for the Tanzanian society reflects how socially embedded the meanings of Kiswahili are in the Tanzanian society. Hanks (2005, 69-70; 72) analyses that instead of rules or codes, Bourdieu offers social embedding as the explanation for the regularities of practices in societies or communities. I see social embedding as a reference to the common social background of the students: as social actors in similar environment as the citizens of the same country, the students have developed their way of thinking and being. They are embedded in the linguistic reality of Tanzania, in which the positions and meanings of the languages have established themselves in the course of historical, political and social developments. This social embedding reflects what could be seen as the linguistic habitus of the students: the common ways of talking about a language and using the language in the Tanzanian society. It also has an effect on the linguistic practices the students develop.

## **5.2. The intimate Kiswahili**

As discussed in Chapter 2, Kiswahili's role in the Tanzanian national politics is a well-known and much studied issue. The themes discussed in the previous chapters are brought up by many students and basically offer nothing very surprising or new.

But what makes the role of Kiswahili more interesting is that Kiswahili seems to mean also something very personal to the students, and most students seem to have a very intimate relationship with the language. Kiswahili is described as the easiest, most used and most important language by most of the students; it is the main medium of thinking and most important medium of expression. The intimate role of Kiswahili is emphasized by the almost passionate and colourful descriptions the students give about the language. The SAUT English teachers interviewed commented that the students have an identity in Kiswahili but not in English, and this might make learning English more problematic.

In other words, there is also a more subjective side of the meaning given to Kiswahili; one associated not only with the objective “structures” of the society but more with the subjective self. The individual social background and past influence the kind of relationship the students have with languages, and especially how much value they give to the languages. Bourdieu & Passeron (1994, 21) argue that the social background or family influences not only what languages are learned but also what kind of relationship one has with language and how much language is valued. For some

students Kiswahili is the only language they are the native speakers of, because they know the local languages of the parents only shallowly and despite its role in the education sector, English has remained a foreign language. Kiswahili thus has become more meaningful to the students than any other other language.

This shows that, as Blackledge & Creese (2010, 17) claim, in addition to being social constructs, languages are unavoidably also elements of the identity. Jokinen & Juhila (1999, 75) see that identity is concretised in language use. The objective structures, or the conditions of the society, are embodied in the students' linguistic competences, each in its individual way. Bill Ashcroft (2001, 160) positions the habitus between ideology and identity, as a relational description of an agent making active choices and using the cultural capital of the dominant power or ideology to the extent needed. This fits to the situation the students are in: the meaning of Kiswahili is constructed through its symbolic position in the society as well as its personal importance.

This is where I for the first time see the reflection of the linguistic habitus of the students as described by Bourdieu (1977, 410-413): in the talk about Kiswahili repeating itself a certain way, adjusted to and informed about the social and societal meanings the language has, but also as an expression of its personal importance. Also Blackledge & Creese (2010; 37, 40) comment on how identities are constructed and validated through the linguistic practices available for an individual in connection to the relevant social phenomena like nation or ethnicity. The meaning of Kiswahili for the identity shows how the subjective and the objective are intertwined in the students' dispositions concerning the language. This can be seen as a reflection of the habitus.

### **5.3. The multilingual practices of code-mixing in the campus**

Despite the meaningful role given to Kiswahili, multilingualism and the triglossia between Kiswahili, English and the local languages is present in the lives of the students all the time and also in the campus. In the questionnaire I directly asked if the students saw multilingualism as a positive phenomenon:

*How do you think does the knowledge of different languages influence your personality? How do you benefit from it?*

It was apparent that in most answers multilingualism was understood as knowledge of non-African languages (in practice English). This is interesting, because I see that for an average Tanzanian, multilingualism means in practice using a local language and Kiswahili. However, the answers are understandable when considering the practical environment of the students, the campus, where English and Kiswahili are used quite interchangeably. It is also possible that the students understood that because I was a foreigner, the question must implicitly refer to English knowledge.

In most answers multilingualism was seen beneficial, because knowing many languages enables connection to and communication with the other parts of the world. This global communication was seen to have different benefits. One student was of the opinion that for her knowledge of many languages is a positive thing, because it enables interaction with different people and interaction is the source of development. Most students wrote that for them multilingualism was unproblematic, though some commented that the language used less is easily forgotten and many languages can cause mixing. In addition to English overriding Kiswahili, with this the students referred to the few possibilities to use the local languages.

Code-switching and -mixing are closely related to multilingualism, and it was impossible to avoid hearing how the students constantly switched between English and Kiswahili. Usually code-mixing means inserting English words into Kiswahili but there are also examples of mixing Kiswahili while speaking English (an example of this is discussed in 7.3.1.)<sup>29</sup>. Mixing influences language use also on a more general level: I observed how expressions in Kiswahili have a strong influence on the common expressions the students use in English. Code-mixing between Kiswahili and the local languages (cf. Petzell 2012a; 140, 142) is also there, but it was most likely less common in the campus context.

There are different reasons for a multilingual individual to choose an expression from a particular language. Obviously, code-mixing can be influenced by competence factors: the lexical item needed is unknown or can not be translated in a satisfactory way. Both in code-mixing and -switching the social context and domain of language use are other factors at play: the speaker might want to identify him/herself with a certain social group by using a certain language or marked language varieties (for example dialects). In code-switching the change can be connected to certain topics or subject matters or to changes in the social situation. A SAUT student can speak English with lecturers when they talk about matters concerning studies but switch into Kiswahili when

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<sup>29</sup> Nota Bene: English words inserted to the Kiswahili talk are pronounced approximately like in English.

discussing other issues. All in all, changing or mixing language is often unconscious and the shift itself might be as meaningful as the content. (Wolff 2000, 317-318; Saville-Troike 1989; 60, 62, 69; Blom & Gumberz 1972; 409, 425.)

In the context of education, the borrowed words are often study terminology. Saida Yahya-Othman (1990, 49) claims that use of the two languages in the education system causes confusion in the development of concepts. Basic terminology is developed in primary school in Kiswahili but after that the concepts are in English, which means the students are not necessarily capable of discussing issues regarding studies in Kiswahili. There have been no practical situations in which the terminology developed in Kiswahili by the National Kiswahili Council (BAKITA) could be used. M.K.Kapinga & al (1990, 32) write that code-mixing in relation to technical terms should be seen as a natural expression of educational bilingualism and that teachers and students should not be scolded at or made feel inadequate if they practice code-mixing of terminology.

Blackledge & Creese argue (2010, 24) that linguistic practices can become basis for social differentiation. In Tanzania knowing English very often signals that you are more educated and therefore inserting English words into Kiswahili talk can signal the upper social status of the speaker. This most likely confirms the connection English has to education and ideas of, for example, development or modernity, a theme further discussed in 7.3.1. All in all, code-mixing between English and Kiswahili shows how linguistic practices are always subject to and shaped by linguistic ideologies, which are again shaped by linguistic practices (Ibid., 56).

### **5.3.1. Kwa mfano<sup>30</sup>: examples of code-mixing**

This chapter presents some examples of typical code-mixing of English in Kiswahili as observed talk in the talk of the students and in pictures taken on the campus.

The following quote is from the only interview, in which we mainly spoke Kiswahili with the student. In practice this meant that sometimes, like in this quote, I asked the question in English, but the student replied in Kiswahili. We both used code-mixing quite extensively during the interview.

I: *“I’m asking like how you personally, just how, is there a change? Like when you change from English to Kiswahili or otherwise? The way you feel about speaking the language? What kind of*

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<sup>30</sup> 'For example' in Kiswahili.

*change, like in the way you express yourself, and your confidence?”*

S: “Yeah, yeah. Unapokuwa unashift kutoka kwenye Kiingereza kwenda kwenye Kiswahili. **In other words**, tunaweza tukasema kunatokea kwamba kunatokea vitu kama **vi-codemix na code-switch** unaona eeh kwa sababu pale mtu anapokuwa **anashift** kutoka kwenye lugha moja anaenda nyingine, direct huwezi **ukacope** nayo kwa moja kwa moja. Mfano mimi nikishift kutoka kwenye Kiingereza nikija Kiswahili, nitaongea proper Kiswahili. Lakini nikija kushift kutoka kwenye Kiswahili kwenda kwenye Kiingereza, **lazima nitaspeak, unproper yaani English ambayo imelack grammar katika kuongea**. Kwa hiyo yaani lugha mtu anavyokuwa anaongea ukiongea lugha ambayo unayoiuia **unakuwa na a full of confidence** na mudu ya kukuweza kuiongea vizuri na kuweza **kupronounce** mtu akasikia, nini, **anafeel comfortable** wakati unapokuwa unaongea. Lakini unapoongea lugha ambayo unaona kwamba hapa mimi siielewi vizuri, kitu cha kwanza unakuwa **umelack confidence** wakati wa kuongea. Halafu pia **unakuwa na ile fear, labda maybe**, naweza nikaongea, naweza nikaongea vibaya, may naweza nikakosea, may be labda nikaweka place yaani grammar ambayo haitakiwi kwa hiyo sasa ile pale inamfanya mtu yaani anakuwa anafeel yaani kama hataki kuongea, **analack confidence**. Ambacho anaweza akaongea **kitu ambacho kiko very short**. Ambacho anaweza kuongea kwa Kiswahili angeweza akakongea **very long na lot of examples**. Lakini anapoongea kwa Kiingereza, **ataongea very short**. Na maybe, akaweza akatoa example au asitoe kabisa yakaweza kuishia pale. Na pia hata mtu anapokuwa anaongea lugha anayoiielewa lazima atairemba ataweka vitu vyake vingine vidogo vidogo ambavyo vitamfanya mtu aweze kuelewa zaidi. Lakini mtu anapokuwa anaongea labda lugha ambayo **ni very difficult**, ambayo hayko naya kabisa, anakuwa yaani, anaongea yani maneno yale **ambayoyako strictly**, hana misamiati mipya, **no vocabularies**, anakuwa anaongea maneno yaleyale halafu pia anaweza akawa anarudia sentensi.”<sup>31</sup>

(female, 21, sociology)

I have emboldened all places where code-mixing is used and will analyse them below. A summarized translation is also given. I consider a summarized translation to be sufficient because the code-mixing is actually more interesting than the content of this quote. My question is also quite leading and the student's answer was quite self-evident. In addition, the mixing makes the style of

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<sup>31</sup> There are few quotes like this – transcriptions of spoken Kiswahili – in this thesis, because all other interviews except for this were done almost entirely in English. These transcriptions were checked by a native Kiswahili speaker. In addition to this one, other quotes in Kiswahili are from the questionnaires and I have translated them in cooperation with native Kiswahili speakers.



speaking quite impossible to translate exactly and there are many expletives and some repetition in the student's talk, which makes the answer seem longer than the actual content.

*When she, or generally a person, speaks English, this person does not necessarily speak it correctly and is afraid of making mistakes. Therefore the person does not feel confident, speaks with short and simple sentences and does not use many examples. But when speaking Kiswahili, the person can elaborate more freely and feel more confident.*

First of all, this student seems to be very conscious of mixing the languages: in the beginning she reflects on the meaning of my question and sees the connection to the phenomena code-mix/shift. This shows that code-mixing is not only a common practice in the Tanzanian society but also something Tanzanians are aware of.

***In other words, tunaweza tukasema kunatokea kwamba kunatokea vitu kama vi-codemix na code-switch unaona ...***

= In other words, we can say that from things like the ways of code-mixing and code-switching you see... (Free translation)

The following cases are typical examples of conjugating a verb in English in Kiswahili structures.

|                 |                     |                 |                |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Anashift</b> | → <b>a</b>          | <b>+ na</b>     | <b>+ shift</b> |
|                 | Singular 3rd person | + present tense | + shift        |
|                 |                     | = He/she shifts |                |
| <b>Utacope</b>  | → <b>u</b>          | <b>+ ta</b>     | <b>+ cope</b>  |
|                 | Singular 2nd person | + future tense  | +cope          |
|                 |                     | = You will cope |                |

In the following sentence code-mixing is used quite extensively:

***Lakini nikija kushift kutoka kwenye Kiswahili kwenda kwenye Kiingereza, lazima nitaspeak unproper yaani English ambayo imelack grammar katika kuongea.***

= When I shift from Kiswahili to English, I irrevocably speak improperly, which means I speak English with grammar mistakes. (Free translation).

***nikija kushift***

= 'when shifting'

She combines a Kiswahili verb construction expressing continuity (not easy to translate) with the infinitive in English – the prefix *ku-* before the verb 'shift' implies infinitive form in Kiswahili.

***nitaspēak***

**ni**                      **+ta**              **+ speak**              **unproper**

1st person singular                      +future              + speak

= I [will] speak [English]<sup>32</sup> unproper[ly]

The student conjugates the English verb 'speak' in the Kiswahili structure and adds an English adjective behind it. My interpretation is that she wanted to use the adverb form 'improperly', but she actually used the basic form. Edgar C. Polome (1967, 219) sees the problems of finding suitable equivalents in English for the Kiswahili structures expressing adverbs, as one of the common problems for a Kiswahili speaker learning English.

***imelack grammar katika kuongea***

**I**

*it (refers to noun class 9, formal subject)*

**+me**

*perfect tense*

**+lack**

*+lack*

***katika kuongea***

*in speaking*

= There is a lack of grammar when speaking

The verb 'lack' is conjugated in Kiswahili also in the following expressions:

**umelack confidence**

**u + me + lack**

you + perfect tense + lack

= You have lacked.

**analack confidence**

**a**

**+na**

**+lack**

= He/she lacks

he/she + present tense + lack

The student uses adjectives in English in several expressions.

<sup>32</sup> The words added in [brackets] are added in order to make the sentence of the quote meaningful without the original context.

**... kitu ambacho kiko very short.**

= ... something that is very short

**... ni very difficult**

= ... is very difficult

The following is a good example of borrowing idiomatic expressions from English:

**... anafeel comfortable**

**a + na +feel comfortable**

3 person singular + present tense + feel

= She/he feels comfortable.

The student also uses Kiswahili possessive forms with an English noun. In Kiswahili the possessive is expressed in a structure which literally translated means 'to be with something'.

**... unakuwa na full of confidence**

**u + na + kuwa na**

2nd person singular

+ possessive form

+ the verb 'be' with

= You are full of confidence

**unakuwa na ile fear, labda maybe**

**u + na + kuwa na**

2nd person singular + possessive form

+ the verb 'be' with

that fear, maybe, maybe

= You are scared that maybe maybe ~ you are with that fear that maybe, maybe

Earlier on in the interview the student uses an English word as an adjective in a very interesting way:

**Kiswahili nakijua vizuri sana tena kuliko lugha ya kitribe.**

= I know Kiswahili very well compared to tribal language.

'Lugha ya kitribe' is 'tribal language' in English. In Kiswahili the adjectives are placed after the

nouns, which in this case means the student uses an adjective in English but inserts it in the Kiswahili sentence structure. She also adds the prefix *ki-* in front of the English word 'tribe' and in the context of the previous discussion in the interview, this *ki-* means that she uses 'kitribe' as an adjective of the word Kichagga, the local language she knows. This means that she conjugates an English adjective like she would conjugate it in the Kiswahili sentence structure.

The student uses the same expression '*lugha ya kitribe*' for a tribal language also elsewhere in the interview. The question is not so much why she conjugates an English adjective in Kiswahili, but rather why she chooses to use the adjective in English instead of Kiswahili, especially for a concept that is as politically significant as the question of the ethnic group.

It is possible that the student simply thinks that I would understand better to which languages she refers if she refers to them in English. It's also possible that this is somehow connected to how the ethnic groups and local languages are seen and described in Kiswahili: the Kiswahili concept '*kabila*' was used as a separative concept by the colonial administration (see 2.3). Earlier on in the interview she refers to the local languages with the expression 'mother tongue' instead of the Kiswahili equivalents like '*lugha za awali*' or '*lugha za jamii*' ('language of origin' or 'of society'). This points in the direction that the student might see the expression which refers to the English word 'tribe' somehow easier.

These examples also show that code-mixing can happen in any type of linguistic context - English and Kiswahili can be mixed not only in the form of words but also in grammatical structures. The fact that the words mixed can be such simple words shows that code-mixing is not always a matter of not finding the words in Kiswahili. It also implies that in this case mixing is not a matter of changing the language to ensure I would understand what the student is saying.

In other words, I will not analyse these examples further, because it would be impossible to find out why the student replaces common Kiswahili words by English words. The change of language could be conscious or unconscious, connected to the social situation with me or then just spontaneous, creative and improvised use of the language. In these examples the language change might be more important than the possible symbolic interpretations of why it changes.

#### **5.4. The critical habitus**

As described in 7.2, habitus is a good concept for describing the merging of social and individual characteristics in the behaviour of a person. When linked with multilingualism and mixing, the concept of habitus nevertheless shows its weaknesses. Bourdieu's original concept of habitus has often been criticized of making the agents homogeneous and passive and not offering enough room for individual improvisation (Block 2012, 51-52; Rowsell 2012, 117-118, 120; Moore & Sanders 2006, 12). When applied to this study and analysis, I am critical of how Bourdieu (1977, 407-411) sees the habitus and practices as unconscious principles which guide the actions of the agents without them being aware of these principles. In reference to this study, this would according to my understanding mean that the students do not know that what they do has more meaning.

The reasons for this critique are the following. First of all, the students are also not unconscious of the multilingual practices they are performing because as described above, the choice of using a language carries many social and symbolic meanings in Tanzania. As the process of creating the position of Kiswahili as the Tanzanian national language has been so open and evident in the Tanzanian society, it is almost impossible that the students would not be conscious of this societal meaning of the language. Also the frequent use of code-mixing and -switching is a sign that the students are aware and conscious of the social implications of language use. I thus do not see the students being passive in the meaning-making process, not at least in the extent Bourdieu describes the habitus.

Secondly, despite the similarities of the descriptions the students give about the languages, I do not see that the students are passively receiving the meanings given to Kiswahili in the Tanzanian society. The students namely have also divergent opinions about the position of Kiswahili and Kiswahili's position, and qualities were also criticized. Many of these negative comments about Kiswahili concerned more its position in the society than the personal or social meaning of the language.

As Rubagumya (2003, 156) describes, Kiswahili is seen quite useless in Tanzania. Some students commented that Kiswahili is not as useful as English in the global world. Some students said Kiswahili does not have the capacity for development due to, for example, the limited amount of words. Kiswahili was also seen as a difficult language to master perfectly – this most likely refers

to the difference between the practical language use in everyday life in contrast to the official, standard Kiswahili from the Zanzibar region. The students also described Kiswahili's position as inferior to English and said that it overlaps and subordinates the local languages. Lack of resources in Kiswahili like books or alike was considered problematic and one student was quite sure that Kiswahili would be replaced by English in the future.

The students also did not describe Kiswahili only as the national language but it was also seen as an international language.

Q: Which of these languages [you know] would you like to know better? Please explain why.

A: *English, Kiswahili, I like to know them better because they are world wide this means I can use them internationally.* (female, 22, education)

This is true: Kiswahili is spoken in many countries, it is taught at universities around the world and it has both native and non-native speakers of various nationalities (Yahya-Othman 1990, 43). Also Mazrui & Mazrui (1995, 100-101) write that Kiswahili is one of the most international or at least internationally promising indigenous languages on the African continent. Already in 1975 Ali M. Mazrui (1975, 60) saw Kiswahili as the 7th most important international language in the world. Blommaert (2010, 77) writes that African languages like Kiswahili can become a medium of global communication within a particular, specified network or setting of communication – it can become a cultural code for globalized culture in this particular network. This is a rather new aspect and phenomenon, which is visible, among others, in the use of Kiswahili on the internet. (Blommaert 2010, 77.)

A couple of students mentioned they would like more people to know Kiswahili. One student claimed that the old socialist government originally believed that through the use of Kiswahili Tanzania could become a superpower and people would come to learn Kiswahili if they wanted to work in Tanzania. One student of education in literature and Kiswahili thought that her future career as a Kiswahili teacher could make her internationally mobile: she could travel to other countries to teach Kiswahili, and to realize these kinds of plans she would also need to know English. In these comments the local and the global are combined in an interesting way: Kiswahili can also be seen as a globally attractive language enabling something on a wider scale than in just Tanzania.

Blommaert (2010, 186-187) writes about the critical voices in the Tanzanian society concerning the “monoglot regime of language.” The importance of Kiswahili for the national unity has been acknowledged also by the critical groups in the society, but the idea of individual monolingualism has not been accepted that easily. Various groups in the society have developed “counter-hegemonic discourses and practices.” This means that the existing linguistic resources and practices have not been replaced by Kiswahili, but Kiswahili has been given specific functions, and code-mixing and -shifting have become common. The intellectuals in the country have also raised questions about the socialist values Kiswahili was supposed to communicate. (Ibid., 186-187)

Blommaert (2010, 184-187) analyses that the problem concerning the use of Kiswahili versus English has been the state's unbalanced position between national and international interests. Basically the Tanzanian state has been strong in controlling the national space. But in addition, the state has been oriented towards the transnational ideals: to Pan-Africanism, Western education, development ideals and, as a very poor country, different forms of assistance from the transnational level. Quoting Blommaert (2010, 186), the state got “*stuck between these two levels*” - it was both strong and weak and the influences from the national and transnational levels were not harmonized.

## **5.5. Summary**

The students make Kiswahili meaningful for themselves through relating it to the nation state and the identity of the nation. Kiswahili's meaning is seen through the communicative and integrative roles it has in the society. What Kiswahili means for the students reflects how embedded the social meaning of Kiswahili is in the society. The different students' talk concerning Kiswahili is quite similar and this can be seen as a reflection of what Bourdieu called the linguistic habitus, the common way of speaking about languages in the society.

This meaning related to Kiswahili's role in the society is complemented by the meaning of Kiswahili for the students as individuals – not only the social but also the individual linguistic tendency of a person to use Kiswahili. For most students Kiswahili is the first language they have learned in their lives, although some of them have learned it more or less simultaneously with a local language. For most students, Kiswahili is the medium of thinking, the best known and the most used language - an integral part of the identity of the students. Despite the generally positive role that Kiswahili has for the students, the students are also critical of the role of Kiswahili.

Although the practices of using Kiswahili have spread out to almost all domains of language use, in many fields the students nevertheless also encounter other languages with their own practices of use. On the campus these multilingual encounters happen primarily with English. In these encounters the students develop multilingual practices, in which they switch and mix the languages. The students more or less consciously and critically improvise with the linguistic resources they have at their disposal. In some cases they use the structures and words that first spring to mind, while in other situations using another language seems to be more socially appropriate. Code-mixing is used especially when talking in Kiswahili; other languages are inserted into Kiswahili talk in Kiswahili to the extent needed.

## **6. English: the global Kizungu**

English language is nowadays used all around the world. Ute Smit (2010, 2; 45) describes that English has become an important lingua franca in international relations and trade, in international media and communication, as well as in international business and academia. English has gained this position, among other things, due to the military power of the English-speaking nations, the socio-economic power of the English-dominated international companies and organizations, and the globalization trend in general (Smit 2010; 2, 45; Mazrui 1975, 192).

This is the context in which English is used also in Tanzania. There are nevertheless also other features in the use of English which are specific to the way English is used in Tanzania. Based on the talk of the students, in this chapter I look into these features and analyse what English means to the students. I analyse the English usage in relation to the social phenomena I encountered in the field.

Due to the width of the issue, the role of the English language in the Tanzanian education system is discussed in the following chapter.

### **6.1. Global communication**

Almost all of the students described English as ‘an international language enabling communication globally.’ English was seen as an important and positive language, and it was connected to the requirements of the global era and working life. The following quotes from the interviews are very



typical examples of the descriptions the students gave about English.

*I think English is good because it's like international language, it's an international language, and here in Tanzania we use English because so as to enable us, to be able to make integration with other countries. And it's believed that it's an international language, used in almost all the countries of the world. That's why we use it. (female, 23, sociology)*

Q<sup>33</sup>: *Which of these languages you already know would you like to know better? Please explain why.*

A: *[English because] it is an international language used in international forums and is used to facilitate communication globally. (female, 21, sociology)*

Q: How important is English for Tanzanian people, especially compared to Swahili? Please explain your answer.

A: *English language is very important in Tanzania compared to Kiswahili because English is an international language. It enable the speaker communicate worldwide unlike Swahili which has a limited number of speakers.*

(Male, 30, education)

Q: Which of these languages you already know would you like to know better? Please explain why.

A: *English language because it is a worldwide commercial language that connect all the people across the world. I want to know it better so that it can connect me to the world and the world to me.*

(Male, 23, education)

Also the importance of English for international cooperation was mentioned by many students.

Especially the growing role of the East African Community<sup>34</sup> for language policies is mentioned by several students (cf. Mazrui & Mazrui 1995; 95; Mazrui 1975; 44, 99). An example from a questionnaire:

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<sup>33</sup> 'Q' used here and in the following similar contexts refers to the question presented in the questionnaire. 'A' refers to the answer produced by the student.

<sup>34</sup> The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organisation including Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. Its headquarters are located in Arusha, Tanzania, and it's active on political, social, economic and cultural fields . The treaty for its establishment was signed in 1999. For more information see the homepage [www.eac.int](http://www.eac.int).

Q: Which language you like the most of the languages you know? Please explain why.

A: *Naipenda lugha ya Kiingereza kwani inasaidia kuimarisha ushirikiano na urafiki kwa watu na mataifa mengine.*

I love English language since it helps to strengthen cooperation and friendship with other nations.

(female, 21, education)

In many African countries the position of English is reinforced by the need to develop international trade (Swilla 1992, 512). One student connected the need for English to foreign investors and private sector actors in need of people with English knowledge to work for their business activities in Tanzania. He contrasted this with the socialist past and the role it gave to Kiswahili. It is true that most likely the development of the Tanzanian economic policies after the socialist period has increased the need to foster the communication relations in English and not in Kiswahili.

At first glance the students thus seem to give English language the powerful role described above but actually the same could be said about English anywhere. Just like for Kiswahili, there were many similarities in the students' answers. However, this time many students described the position of English with almost the same words. They did not express themselves as passionately and elaborately concerning English compared with Kiswahili. This made me wonder at first if the similarity of the answers was just something the students think they were supposed to say, especially in front of a foreigner? Remembering the SAUT English teachers' comment about the students not having an identity in English, the similarities can also be seen as pointing to the less intimate relationship with English.

In one interview I asked the student in which kind situations outside the class the student would use English, and he pointed out that the interview situation with me was exactly an example of such a situation. I was precisely the kind of international person the students I interviewed described as a person who knows English, and the interview situation was exactly the kind of situation, in which English is needed in Tanzania. The linguistic positions we had in the interview situation concretised the differences between the so-called first and the third world, the rich north and the poor south, and the Tanzanian students most likely added the opportunity to engage in this type of exchange studies to the other positive possibilities wazungu or the people who know English seemed to have in their lives.

It is impossible to know if the international meaning of English was emphasized more, because I

was a sort of living proof that the language can mean international possibilities and mobility. But all in all, I think the international relevance of English would have been a part of the meaning-making process even if I had not have been present, because it is so strongly connected to the position of English in Tanzania and in the whole world. This international role of English should nevertheless be seen as a reflection of the linguistic habitus of the students: it refers to the typical outlook towards the English language at the SAUT campus and in Tanzania, as well as to the international role of the language.

Already at this stage I want to point out that there are also students in the data whose answers reflect another opinion about the role of English in the Tanzanian society, one that criticises of the use of English in the country. This discussion, especially in reference to the LOI question, is dealt with more extensively in Chapter 7. Some students expressed their discontent with English because it is a colonial language and not connected with the reality of their own lives. Some students also said that due to globalization and neo-colonialism there is no real alternative for using English in Tanzania. Students are thus no passive actors but fully able to criticize the meaning-making processes and not unconscious of them

## **6.2. Kizungu**

I start the analysis of the deeper and more symbolic meanings of the English language through the analysis of the concept of Kizungu. The word Kizungu consists of the prefix *ki-* which is used for all languages and the body *-zungu*, which, just like the concept of *mzungu*, is derived from the verb *-zunguka*, 'to move around (aimlessly).'

Kizungu is the language spoken by the *wazungu* and according to my observations and queries, in practice it usually means English<sup>35</sup> or some other European language spoken by the *wazungu* (that it would encompass Asian languages like Chinese does not seem to be the case). It is difficult to determine which languages the meaning of Kizungu encompasses, because the meaning is dependent on who actually uses the word and in which context. As Halliday (1978; 3, 160) writes, every person has his or her own habits of meaning and meaning is always a fundamentally social act. Lehtonen (1996; 35, 212) describes how language actively changes, renews and re-creates meanings - also the meaning of Kizungu is actively constructed and renewed by the people using it

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<sup>35</sup> The actual Kiswahili word for the English language is 'Kiingereza.'

in different social situations.

My observations point in the direction that Kizungu is used more by people who do not actually know the language, like children and less educated Tanzanians. This means that the word Kizungu is not used by the students and it is more a phenomenon I observed in Tanzanian in general.

Nevertheless I see Kizungu as a relevant category for my thesis because it is interesting in itself that there seems to be a sort of general category for a 'foreign, European language' in Kiswahili.

Kizungu language carries the same colonialist heritage as the word *mzungu* and therefore it places English into the global world on a wider, historical scale. I see Kizungu as a background factor that makes the meaning that English has in Tanzania more understandable and describes the context of the study.

I believe the word Kizungu is used not only because of lack of knowledge about different languages in Europe (for example because of the impression that the *wazungu* have only one language which all of them speak), but also because it carries connotations and signals of 'we' and 'them', about global movement and the different roles the Tanzanians and *wazungu* have in it. I see Kizungu as a social category dividing the world into Tanzanians and the others, the foreigners. It includes the relations between English and Kiswahili, the Tanzanians and the *wazungu*, and the students and myself.

I consider the way the university students describe English as an important language because it enables contact with '*outsiders*', '*other nations*', '*those other people*', '*other races*' or '*foreigners*' to be a reflection of the meaning of Kizungu. English is seen as something strange, something from the outside. Nevertheless Kizungu, a language of the others, of the foreigners, is used in Tanzanian domestic activities, like in education.

As Geertz (1973, 12) writes, when using a concept inherent in another society, it is necessary to know what it means in and for the society. My attempt to describe the meaning of Kizungu is naturally that of an outsider, and Kizungu most likely has meanings I am not aware of or it can be less meaningful than I think it is. Nevertheless, in the context of this study I see Kizungu as one of the basic ingredients of the linguistic field of Tanzania and one of the fundamental perceptions concerning the multilingual reality of the country. It is a strong background factor behind English language use and its meaning is reflected in the meaning English has for the students. The fact that there is a concept for a language such as this in Kiswahili, already signals the meaning of the

European languages and especially English. Kizungu confirms and constructs the linguistic reality of Tanzania and represents the way of speaking about English in Tanzania.

But like for example Roy-Campbell (2001, 151) writes, it is evident that English does enable Tanzanians to have access to the outside world with its knowledge, business, and global culture. In principle the situation is the same in Finland with its very small language and the need to communicate with the outside world in English. But Roy-Campbell (2001, 151) argues that in addition to this, in Tanzania some politicians, parents, teachers and students have the underlying attitude that English is not only a ‘functional’ language, especially in science, technology, and knowledge generally, but is also “a tool of social progress.”

### **6.3. The difference of the language**

In addition to the division of the global world concretised by the concept Kizungu, English seems to represent a social division also within the Tanzanian people. The students in my data confirmed that in Tanzania the ability to speak English is a very strong indicator of being educated and international, being somehow superior – like described by Roy-Campbell above, it is indeed a tool of social progress.

In many African countries European languages are associated with education, better chances of employment and modernity in general. It is true that knowing English can grant access to socio-economic benefits in Tanzania, especially because it is so clearly connected with the level of education. English can nevertheless be learned also simply because it is seen as prestigious. (Simpson 2008, 15; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 137.) This is also the case in Tanzania: despite the fact that English is nowadays no longer needed for example as the language of administration or politics like during the British colonial era, the way English was consciously portrayed as a language of the elite during colonial times most likely still influences the typical outlook on English in Tanzania. The development of English into the language of globalization has not helped changing the situation. (Roy-Campbell 2001, 117). (On the influence of the language of education for the position of English, see Chapter 7).

The following quote is an example of the social indications of knowing English:

*“For Tanzanian people English is just a normal language, but for the Tanzanian elites, intellectuals*

*and globalized people, it's the international language to be learned and known because it helps them in interaction, link and communication with other international people from Asia, Europe, America, Austria and Africa in particular.” (male, 23, sociology)*

Mazrui described already in 1975 (89-90) that in Tanzania, like in a number of other African countries, the concept of intellectual has been strongly connected to the knowledge of English language. In Bourdieu's (1991, 166-170) terms, the student above expresses his belief in the symbolic legitimacy of English and through his utterances also contributes to the constitution of its symbolic position in the society. These kinds of opinions or meanings of English language are important for maintaining the prestigious, symbolic position of English in the Tanzanian linguistic reality.

There is also a slight sense of irony in these types of comments. This is visible in the questionnaire answers to the question whether language influences a person and the way they feel about themselves. Many students wrote that some people might feel superior and proud if they are able to speak English or other European languages, or at least other people would think that they must feel so. A couple of students commented that this is the reason why they do not always want to use English. The superior position of the language is thus not only positive, because it makes the social divisions in the society almost too concrete.

Swilla (1992, 513) writes that any language can create divisions in the society and whatever language is used the most important thing is to ensure that the whole population has “equal access to socio-economic opportunities.” Also Blommaert (2010; 193) comments on the inequality produced by the use of English in Tanzania. English is an important language for some people in Tanzania, but not for all, and the knowledge of English represents a division between the haves and have-nots in the Tanzanian society. The word Kizungu concretises how the linguistic reality affects the social reality and the other way around. Bourdieu (1991, 54) writes that languages as organized systems of differences produce other systems of social differences. I suggest that this can mean that hierarchies of languages can express hierarchies of social groups.

These type of hierarchies and underlying attitudes influence the way the students think, talk about and use the English language. Especially the practices of using English are affected by this, because the choice to use it or even to mix its words while speaking Kiswahili sends strong symbolic messages into the social environment.

In the campus area speaking English is, of course, more common than elsewhere in Tanzania and the language is basically known and used by everybody. Just like in Tanzania on the whole (cf. Petzell 2012, 142), there are clear differences among the students in the confidence and how accustomed they are to use English, based on, for example, where they went to secondary school (see 7.3). There are hierarchies of English use also among the students. I witnessed situations where a student translated my English into Kiswahili by one student to a group of other students. Also issues of accent and the way of speaking naturally had a role in this, but I felt as if one student put himself in a superior position compared to the others, because he showed that at least he knew the language well enough.

#### **6.4. Technology and stationeries**

English is also more or less concretely related to access to technology and scientific information (cf. Mwinsheikhe 2003, 143). Torill Aagot Halvorsen (2009, 320) argues that the use of English as a language of instruction in the education system is often validated through the need to know English in order to access information and communication technology (ICT) in the global world. During our quite free discussion on the topic, one student explained that

*...people think if you are speaking English you are rich and everything, very bad. ... They might think you know much, you can maybe access to foreign affects like aids and other things. (male, 27, sociology)*

In interviews and several questionnaires, technology, tourism and literature were mentioned as things accessed through the knowledge of English. The following quote is a very typical example of talk concerning access provided by English versus Kiswahili:

*English is a international language, it's a language used in many places, and Kiswahili has, it's not in the books, a lot of books are not like, and technology is all in English, so you are suppose to learn English, we are forced because of globalization and stuff like that. (Female, 23, sociology)*

The phenomenon of not being able to access books and technology is very concrete on the SAUT campus. These material and financial problems should be seen in connection to the financial difficulties and uneven distribution of wealth in the Tanzanian society in general. The issues

concerning access to technology and literature are nevertheless as straightforward as it may first seem and the contradictory practices produced by access to technology can be described through the role the stationeries have for the university students.

There are many shops called stationeries around the SAUT campus. Stationeries are little shops, which provide all kinds of office services from internet access to copying and laminating texts. In order to manage problems regarding access to study materials<sup>36</sup>, in the stationeries the students can buy copies of the books or notes provided by the lecturers during the courses. In addition, because many lecturers required the essays to be in typed form and many students do not have computers or are not able to type, they often bring their hand-written essays to be the stationeries in order be typed by the shopkeepers. Although the shopkeepers' knowledge of English is often limited, these shopkeepers type the essays in English for a small price.

I heard an example of a consequence of this practice, when a lecturer commented that the students should read the essays after they were typed by the shopkeepers and correct them, because there were so many language mistakes in them that the lecturer would have had to fail almost the whole class if he had not decided to ignore the errors when grading the essays. The stationery practice could in the end indirectly affect the study results. Also Rugemalira (1990, 108) describes how university lecturers ignore the language mistakes of the students.

The word 'stationery' caused me some confusion while writing this thesis. I was under the impression that the shop name is spelt 'stationary' which actually means 'not changing' or 'not moving.' After some confusion I realized that these shops are actually called stationeries with an 'e', but they are, most likely accidentally, sometimes spelt with an 'a'. This case is a concrete example of the linguistic confusion on the campus and the effect of my English knowledge. This phenomenon is visible in pictures number 3 and 4a.

This stationery -phenomenon is related to the relationship between access to technology and the knowledge of English. The following quotes are good examples of this:

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<sup>36</sup> At least at the time I collected my data, the university library was not equipped with the amount of books needed for the constantly growing number of students at SAUT university.



Q: How important is English for Tanzanian people, especially compared with Swahili? Please explain your answer.

A: It helps the Tanzanian to get connected with other people in the world and learn their technology.  
(male, 32, education)

Q: Which of these languages [you know] is the most important language for you? Please explain why.

A: *English sababu vitu vingi vya teknolojia vinatumia lugha ya kiingereza na vitabu pia, hata imetafsiri vitabu vingi na innovations nyingi kwa lugha hiyo, yaani lugha nitumiayo kwa masomo hapa Tanzania.*

= English because many technological things use English language and books are translated too, many books and many innovations are in this [English] language, and it is the language which is used as language of studies here in Tanzania.

(female, 22, sociology)

In Tanzania English has been seen as a prerequisite for scientific and technological development (Rubagumya 1990, 2). Swilla (1992, 510-51) wrote already in 1992 that African countries are more and more dependent on the Western developed countries for technology and electronic apparatus. Mazrui (1995, 82) claims that most advanced technology and science have come to Africa through European cultural and political penetration, and Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 138) continue that already during its arrival in East Africa, the English language was originally identified with science and technology.

Mazrui (1995, 33-34) argues that Kiswahili is probably the most suitable language in Africa for transforming technological and scientific information into an indigenous African language. He sees it is the only legitimate African language that can make modern science and technology available for the masses in Eastern Africa. Nevertheless, Halvorsen (2009, 325) claims that at the University of Dar Es Salaam, access to ICT has been used as one of the main arguments for continuing the use of English as the LOI despite the alarming situation concealed by studies on the students' study achievements.

Although there have been analyses on English being structurally better suited for developing scientific and technological vocabulary, Kiswahili has shown to have the capacity to “respond

*creatively to the new linguistic challenge of the scientific age*“(Mazrui & Mazrui 1995; 25, 27). ICT terminology for devices and programs has been developed in Kiswahili. Facebook, Wikipedia and Google as well as Word, Outlook and Power Point also have Kiswahili versions. There are also mobile phone operating systems and applications in Kiswahili. (Halvorsen 2009; 321, 326). According to Halvorsen’s (2009, 325) study, the use of Kiswahili has actually grown due to the increased use of the internet and mobile phones for communication.

Access to technology through the use of stationeries in the campus is an example of a creative practical solution in a situation, in which technology and resources are unequally accessible. The phenomenon produces innovative linguistic practices in relation to the campus and the studies. But when this practice is connected with the linguistic reality of the campus, the contradictions are apparent. Although the students know English and have had the opportunity to study at the university, they cannot access the technological vehicles and/or know-how needed in order to benefit from it. The most shop-keepers probably do not know much English but they have had the capital to set up a small shop with basic computers and copy machines and for earning their living. The students have of course in one way or another invested in their education instead of having a shop or a laptop, and there is most likely an increasing number of students with their own laptops on the SAUT campus. Nevertheless, the use of stationeries shows that knowledge of English is not always the capital needed for a life in Tanzania, and that the university studies are to some extent separated from the Tanzanian linguistic reality.

The result of all of this is that very peculiar linguistic practices like typing essays in English while not knowing the language, have emerged around the campus. When this is connected to Halvorsen’s (2009, 320) argument that the access to ICT in the global era is one of the reasons to keep English as the LOI, the contradictions described above are striking.

## **6.5. Summary**

The students motivate the use of English language in Tanzania mainly with the international importance of knowing the language. For the students English means a way to communicate in the global world and to access information and technology. Many students see the use of English in Tanzania as a positive phenomenon, although there were also critical voices concerning its position, especially regarding its use in the education system (See Chapter 7).

This local meaning of English is concretised in its own word, Kizungu, which basically refers to English or other European languages. Kizungu carries many meanings in Tanzania, but it is not easy to define what it means. The best description of Kizungu is maybe 'a language of the outsiders or foreigners'. The need for Kizungu stems from outside the country, from other societies, and it reflects global power relations.

English not only divides the world into Tanzania and the outside of it, but knowledge of it also represents a division within the country. For example, it is commonly thought that information and resources in general are accessible mainly through knowing Kizungu. The situation is nevertheless more ambiguous than it first seems: technology can be available more in and through Kiswahili than English, like the stationery practices show.

The global situation of the present and the past – colonialism and globalization - influence the linguistic reality and the linguistic practices the students have developed. These practices are nevertheless clearly concretised on the local level; they are embedded in the Tanzanian linguistic reality. As described in 5.4, the Tanzanian state did not consider the linguistic situation equally on the national and international level, and this has led to “*unequal patterns of distribution of linguistic resources*” (Blommaert 2010, 193) in the country. This, according to Blommaert, has partially resulted in the formation of the present, prestigious position of English.

## **7. Learning in English or learning English – the issue of the language of instruction**

Kiswahili and English both function as languages of instruction (LOI) in the education system of Tanzania. This has a strong influence on how the languages are seen and used in the country, and what they mean for people. In this chapter I analyse how the use of these languages as the LOI influences the way the students in my data make the languages meaningful for themselves. I look into how this affects the linguistic practices the students perform. I analyse the LOI issue more extensively, because the study is situated in the framework of the education system and because many of the students’ linguistic practices are connected to the LOI question.

## 7.1 The meaning of the language of instruction

Most students explained the need to know English and the importance of its knowledge in Tanzania through its role in the education system.

The quotes below are answers to the following question in the questionnaire:

Q: How important is English for Tanzanian people, especially compared to Kiswahili?

A: *Lugha ya Kiingereza ni muhimu sana kuliko ya Kiswahili kwa wataanzania kwani Kiingereza ni lugha ya kufundishia kuanzia elimu ya sekondari mpaka ya juu.* English language is very important compared to Kiswahili for Tanzania since English is language of teaching starting from secondary education to higher [education].

(Female, 21, education)

A: *[Kiingereza] Ni muhimu sana kwa sababu masomo yote katika shule za sekondari na vyuo kufundishwa kwa lugha ya Kiingereza.*

[English] Is very important because all the studies in secondary school and higher level educational institutions are taught in English language. (male, 41, education)

A: *English is important for Tanzanian people compared to Kiswahili because it is use in schools as a medium of instructions.*

(female, 23, sociology)

English is thus not important to the students only because its international role, but also due to its use in the education system. Bourdieu (1991; 48, 57) writes that the position the education system gives to different languages is important, because without the education system the social value of linguistic competence in a certain language would not exist. The sociology of language is thus inseparable from the sociology of education, and the LOI is not only the language of instruction but actually the language of education. (Blackledge & Creese 2010, 26; Bourdieu 1991; 45, 48-49, 57, 62.)

In addition, the education system and the languages chosen as the LOI have an important role also in creating the common, national consciousness and national identity (Bourdieu 1991,45). The use of Kiswahili as the LOI in primary school has most likely increased the value and importance of Kiswahili as a national language for the students just like all Tanzanians.

Education system produces the need to know a certain language in the society; the LOI is the language of hegemony and power in the society. In addition, the LOI is the language in which the citizens of a country learn the basic skills and knowledge. (Prah 2003, 17.) Halliday (1978, 163) writes that children learn the established norms of meaning, connected with the established social norms, through language and that these norms are “*embodied in the principles and practices of education.*” The basic knowledge and thinking of the students in my data is clearly based on Kiswahili and some of them even explicitly said that they think in Kiswahili. The early experiences in primary school have verified Kiswahili’s role for the students’ thinking and learning: According to Bourdieu (1991, 167), symbolic systems fulfil their political function not only as instruments of communication but also as instruments of knowledge. The use of Kiswahili as an instrument of knowledge thus again confirms the symbolic position of Kiswahili.

However, the main language of Tanzania is considered sufficient only for primary education, and also English is used in the education system. The education system thus makes both of these languages meaningful and this creates contradictions and inequality concerning education and language in Tanzanian society. Prah (2003, 17) writes that if some other language than the first language of the majority in the country is used as the LOI in the education system, it almost always reflects heritage of history and patterns of dominance like colonialism. George S.J Dei (1998, in Puja 2003, 116) sees that the processes and practices inherited from the colonial times keep reproducing the societal inequalities in African societies. He continues by claiming that denying the use of the first language as the LOI implies the social and cultural inferiority of the people using it as the main language for thinking and communicating.

Bourdieu & Passeron (1994, 9) argue that the choice for the language of the elite as the LOI can separate the reality of the education system from the reality of the country. This is true in Tanzania: the use of English as the LOI in post-primary education separates the everyday, social life from the classroom life and increases social stratification in the society. It widens the gap between elite and masses by defining the language of the masses as inferior and this can lead even to the formation of neo-colonial elites. (Prah 2003; 17-18, 21.)

One student, whose family lives in a village in the rural area and who speaks a local language as his L1, commented that if his studies were in Kiswahili, even his family would understand what he studies. The situation is an example of diglossia in the society: languages have different social

functions and contexts of use in a society, and these are often connected to social differences and inequality. This example shows how the LOI question can form a gap between the educated and non-educated, and how linguistic practices promoted by the LOI confirm the symbolic position of English.

The situation of this student is a good example of how the topic often determines the language of choice in multilingual contexts. Bilinguals might know some topics through one language and other topics through another one. But the choice of language according to the topic is not only connected to knowing certain vocabulary or terminology in one language. It is also related to the appropriateness of speaking about a certain topic, for example, in a local language. Speaking a certain language can be a matter of a role relation especially in the family domain, as it might be expected that a particular person speaks a certain language with a certain person. (Wolff 2000, 323; Saville-Troike 1989; 51, 54-55; Fishman 1972, 443.)

It might be that due to issues linked to hierarchy and roles, for this student it is not appropriate to talk in Kiswahili with his parents, though they all probably know the language well. On the other hand, the student most likely knows concepts concerning his studies in post-primary education only in English, and therefore Kiswahili does not necessarily help in this case. Although most issues can be explained and described in any language, if there is no experience of discussing such issues neither in a local language nor in Kiswahili, the discussion most likely will not flow freely.

## **7.2. Disadvantage of the advantage**

The use of an ex-colonial language as the LOI is to some extent considered self-evident in many African societies. But like described in 2.4.1., there has also been critical discussion in Tanzania concerning the use of English as the LOI. Most of the students in my data said they would prefer that Kiswahili would become the LOI in the whole education system. Some students emphasized that Kiswahili has all the words needed and that the study results would be better if Kiswahili were used. This was said although, like described in 3.5.2., almost all the students said the language has no effect on their own studies and saw it more as a problem of the other students.

Nevertheless, due to the need for English in the global world even those students who would like the language to be changed to Kiswahili, do not consider it as a realistic option. Thus although the role of English in the education system is criticized, it is seen somehow inevitable. The reluctance

to change the language is described both by Mwinsheikhe (in Puja 2003, 122) and Puja. Like in this study, also in Puja's (2003, 122-123) study the lack of vocabulary and books and general unsuitability for technological and scientific use were the common arguments the students named against the use of Kiswahili. A couple of students in this study said that using English as the LOI helps to keep up with the international standards of education.

According to Simpson (2008, 7-8), studies carried out in several countries suggest that parents in general would prefer their children to be educated in two languages: the L1 of the children, in practice either a local language or a lingua franca like Kiswahili, and a European language of wider communication. The use of the L1 would facilitate learning in general and pass cultural knowledge, and the use of a European language would lead to better employment possibilities. In addition, many parents see that there is very little practical use for formal learning in the local languages in Africa. Also material problems as well as problems concerning the education of teachers are often seen as barriers to it. (Ibid., 7.) In the case of Tanzania and Kiswahili, though, these kinds of practical problems actually would not be as big as in some other countries with only many small indigenous languages. There is already a basis for teaching and learning in Kiswahili, a "local language", and practically all the citizens of the country know one language.

Studies have shown that LOI approaches with L1 as the LOI in the beginning of primary education result in faster and improved capacity for acquisition of knowledge. L1 approach also makes learning of a second and third language easier. Major donor agencies such as the World Bank and International Money Fund as well as many African governments, at least in theory, support the view of L1 as the LOI for the first years of primary school. (Prah 2003, 22-23; Yahya-Othman 1990, 45.)

This recommended L1 approach is followed in Tanzania through the use of Kiswahili as LOI in the primary years. However, the idea that a language is learned only by having it as the LOI is still prevalent in Tanzania. Many students in this study seemed to think that if English were not the LOI, Tanzanians would not be able to communicate with people from other countries because the English skills of Tanzanians would be even worse than now. I have encountered this kind of thinking often both in Tanzania and Kenya, and I suggest it could be called confusion between learning English and learning in English. It is widely accepted and confirmed by studies (cf. Mwinsheikhe 2003, 132- 133; Rubagumaya 1990, 27) that from a pedagogical point of view, foreign languages are best learned when they are taught as a subject instead of having them as the LOI. In other words, English is learned better in English lessons than lessons in English.

In conclusion, the symbolic position of English language as the language of instruction and more generally of education is explained and retained through practical reasons. In a country with as poor an economic situation as that of Tanzania, these reasons are relevant to some degree, but they also reflect the symbolic value of the LOI. Mwinsheikhe (2003, 142) summarizes the LOI discussion quite nicely: switching to Kiswahili as the LOI improve the study performance, but it should not be adopted because it is a disadvantage. This might be explained by the fear of change, political issues or, as Mwinsheikhe (2003, 142) puts it, a “*still lingering colonial hangover*.”



Picture 2



A newspaper cutting with an example of positive discussion concerning the use of Kiswahili as LOI and in general.

### 7.3 LOI and secondary school

The students told me that they faced big and concrete practical problems regarding the LOI during the shift to secondary level education. The LOI question thus seems to be more problematic in the

secondary school than in the university, also because the first basis for using English is formed in the secondary school. It is there that the students develop their relation to the language and the typical ways of talking English and talking about English. These experiences in the secondary school are important, because they are reflected in the linguistic practices of the SAUT students.

The majority of the students finishing secondary education have Kiswahili as L1. Those born outside the urban areas usually also speak one of the local languages as L1, which means that Kiswahili is introduced to them as a second language latest in the beginning of primary school and they are in practice bilingual. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 5.)

The English lessons in primary school are supposed to prepare the children for the transition to English in the secondary school, but the children in primary school have very little opportunities to practise English. Those children, who have had practical exposure to English during the primary school for example because their parents have had the opportunity to provide them with extra tuition in English or put them in an English-medium private primary school, are advantaged when entering secondary education. Again the LOI question seems to create a gap between the more and less privileged in Tanzania. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997; 5-6, 43, 88.)

It is commonly known that the primary school teachers teaching the basics of English usually do not know the language that well. Also in the secondary school the teachers do not necessarily use English while teaching, because the pupils might not understand teaching in English. (Mwinsheikhe 2003, 136-142; Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 9-10.) One student of education in my data had experienced this phenomenon during his practical training period in the secondary school: the pupils were not able to follow the instructions he gave them in English. The consequence of these practices in the classroom is that because the students know that there is a translation coming, they are hindered from really learning English. It might be that the teachers do not even really try to get the students to understand the subject matter in English. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997; 13, 77.) The paradox is apparent.

According to George A. Malekela (2003, 106), Tanzanian pupils have a six-week-orientation course in the beginning of secondary school and this is meant to prepare the students to learn subjects from then on taught in English. In the end of this orientation there is an English proficiency test and Malekela was allowed to have a look at the results from four schools tested in 2002. Only 0-8% of the pupils tested passed the test. According to the Tanzania Human Rights Report 2013 (LHRC

2014, 136) the difficulties of learning in English in secondary school are linked to the 2012 secondary school exam results widely discussed in public<sup>37</sup>.

Prah (2003; 25, 30) writes that if the school is started in Kiswahili and the basis for studying is laid in Kiswahili, it would be important to be consequent and make it the LOI throughout the system. Or then, like one student in my data suggested, also primary school should be in English:

*...you know, study in English, it's not an age you want to know languages I think, it starts in primary school. You know better language when you start in primary because you are young and you are ready to learn.* (female, 23, sociology)

But Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 63) argue that switching to English in primary school in Tanzania does not really change the situation, because what is also needed is a support system, on which to build the basis for English. In order to learn English, the society has to offer some use for it in everyday life – many students commented that it is hard to learn any language if it is not used in the society. One student commented on this in relation to the obligatory French lessons offered at the university by writing that using French is a dream, because it is not used in the environment

It has to be mentioned that there is an increasing number of Tanzanian families, in which English is sometimes spoken at home. This is done because English as the LOI gives the children more opportunities in the future (Simpson 2008, 7-8). There was one student in my data whose parents had spoken English at home. The following quote is from the interview with this student:

*The parents they liked us to learn more [English] because they know they say, in this our country, the next years, we all speak English. I wanted to learn English, it is nice, although sometimes, I would like to speak Kiswahili.* (female, 22, education)

The parents wanted the children to have a good knowledge of English, because it's the language of the future and benefits the child the most. Similar attitudes regarding the uselessness of the knowledge of a local language for the future of the children have also been discovered by Ström (2013, 33). Petzell (2012a, 139) writes that in general it is common that speakers of smaller languages abandon their language for the benefits of the bigger language. The student did speak

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<sup>37</sup> For example of the discussion see Haki Elimu joint civil society statement on Form IV exam results ([http://www.hakielimu.org/news\\_detail.php?news=1938](http://www.hakielimu.org/news_detail.php?news=1938)).

very good English but interestingly she was nevertheless studying to become a Kiswahili teacher. The general impression from the interview was that her attachment to Kiswahili was stronger than to English. This could be students' counter-reaction towards how English was presented at home, or then just genuine pleasure of using Kiswahili, the L1. Although I know there are more cases like this in Tanzania, this is an exceptional case in my data. Johanna Ruusuvuori, Pirjo Nikander & Matti Hyvärinen (2010, 24) argue that exceptions are actually interesting clues and even verify the validity of the analysis. This holds true in this case: the use of English in the home domain highlights its position as the symbol of education in Tanzania.

### **7.3.1 *In Kiswahili wanasema wanachapa* - In Kiswahili they say they cane**

The students told me how they experienced the use of English during their secondary school. These experiences are important for understanding the linguistic situation and the linguistic practices of the students and I therefore describe them here.

Most students described that when they went to secondary school they had to force themselves to learn English very fast<sup>38</sup>. Especially those students who went to boarding schools had experienced this, because it was forbidden to speak any other language than English on the school compounds. Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 119) describe how already in the 1940s and 1950s it was prohibited to use any other language than English in the middle/secondary schools, most of which were boarding schools. This 'Speak English Rule' is described also by Malekela (2003, 107), Rubagumya (2003, 160) and Kapinga & al (1990, 27).

A 23-year old female student of sociology describes her feelings about the boarding school in the beginning of her secondary education:

*I: [You were] 14 [years old]. How did you feel, did you get a lot of stress and things like that, because suddenly the big change.*

*S: Yeah, so many, I felt like I wanna go out of here, I don't wanna stay here, because it's so hard, it's hard to make friends coz when you are in school then you meet, students are from English medium schools so they know English better. You feel like you don't belong there. And school I went is a*

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<sup>38</sup> Experiences of learning English in a rapid tempo are also described by Okkolin (2013; 137, 144)

*special school so a lot of kids are from good schools, but we from the Swahili schools, it was so difficult, something like you want to go away from there and you feel humiliated and stuff like that.*

The inequality caused by the difference in the level of exposure to English in primary school is clearly heard in this quote. Another student remembered how surprised everybody was in the private secondary school when he, coming from a public primary school, after only a few months of studying English really hard in his free time, he could even raise his hand and ask a question.

The children were also punished for speaking any other language than English in the school area. Rubagumya (2003, 158) describes that punishments varied from writing a sentence twenty times to corporal punishment. In one school in Dar Es Salaam the school used an interpreter if a parent who does not know English comes to visit the child.

The following quote is from an interview with a 23-year old male sociology student:

S: ... *During my ordinary level even when you get into the school area they put this small, small boards around the areas which influence and initiate you to speak English. Otherwise if you speak another language you will be punished. As well as in my advanced level I experience this some time. **So it was just like a duty to me to speak English** although I didn't know the vocabulary of the words very well, I didn't know how to speak English fluently. But I had to do so in order to improve my knowledge and to cover the curriculum of the studies well.*

I: *What kind of punishment did they use?*

S: *Yeah almost sometimes they, **in Kiswahili wanasema wanachapa**, the punish you, wanachapa, they punish you by sticks, almost three, or two [hits]. Or otherwise you are given another duty maybe to cut an area so they can plant, or they can establish planting some kind of crops.*

This quote is interesting, because when talking about the practical punishment the student switches into Kiswahili. The translation for '*in Kiswahili wanasema wanachapa*' is '*in Kiswahili they say they cane.*' The student first of all explains to me that in Kiswahili the verb for this is '*-chapa*', he also demonstrated how he was hit with a cane on the fingers two or three times. Later on I have found out that the verb '*-chapa*' precisely refers to hitting with a cane. According to my knowledge this kind of punishment through caning is a common form of punishment of all levels of Tanzanian schools.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Caning, on fingers or buttocks as a form of punishment in the Tanzanian primary and secondary school is also

Code-mixing can occur simply because of a lexical need: the lexical item needed is unknown or cannot be translated in a satisfactory way (Saville-Troike 1989; 69; Wolff 2000, 317). It could thus simply be that at the particular moment the student does not find the words to express what he wants in English. Nevertheless, this type of code-mixing – Kiswahili words are inserted into talk in English – is according to my experience not as common as mixing English into Kiswahili. Considering the social setting and my presence, this could also be seen as a case of metaphorical code-switching (Saville-Troike 1989, 60; Wolff 2000, 318). According to Wolff (2000, 318) code-switching is used metaphorically when the speaker changes the language within the same discourse in order “to draw on different associations and social connotations of status and prestige linked to the different codes, thereby overtly signalling their complex social identity.” Maybe the student wanted to explain something of his own society to me, express how things are done in Tanzania through the use of the Kiswahili language.

The fact that the student inserted these Kiswahili words into the talk in English gave me the impression that Kiswahili symbolically represents the Tanzanian society for him. The student might have wanted to identify himself as a Tanzanian – as mentioned above, he might want to explain me that this is what happens in Tanzania, this is how things are done here, in Kiswahili. It could also be that the student wants to associate these kind of punishments with Kiswahili and not with English - the change can be connected to the topic of discussion, to the punishments. This might related to the prestige and status often associated with English.

It could also be that the experience is so private and intimate that the student wanted to express it in the closest language to him – it was easier to talk about the issue in Kiswahili. It is also possible that he did not want to express issues like this in English and considered Kiswahili more suitable for this type of talk. Saying that speaking English in order to perform the studies is like a duty for him, supports this interpretation: English seems to symbolize something formal and official for him.

All in all, it is impossible to know what the change of language really meant for this student; in code-mixing the change of language is often unconscious and the switch itself might be as meaningful as the content (Saville-Troike (1989, 62). This switching can simply signal the multilingual reality of Tanzania and the more or less conscious features that affect the linguistic practices of the students. Speaking in one language is punished while speaking another language is

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described in Okkolin's (2013) research. She also describes the strict discipline held at schools.

a duty and while speaking about speaking these languages the language might be changed in order to give the desired picture of the situation. All the influences like these reflect the linguistic habitus, the common social and personal meanings given to the languages, and the contradictory practices produced through the mix of these meanings.

Several students commented that in the beginning of the secondary school it was sometimes necessary to memorize<sup>40</sup> for exams, because they did not necessarily understand the meaning of what was taught. Sometimes they had had to guess the answer in an exam situation, because they had not understood the question. Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 13) describe the same phenomenon: mixing of Kiswahili and English can result in poor study performance in the secondary school exams, because the exams are in English, although in practice the students may have been studying more in Kiswahili. This can still happen at the university level: myself and many of my classmates did not understand one difficult word in a test question and therefore had to guess what the teacher was asking.

Development of these “survival strategies” such memorizing for exams at least partially result from the LOI policies, and Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 12-13) claim that poor English knowledge can even influence students' ability to think critically and innovatively and pass on the ideas they have learned. This can force students to memorize points, definitions and facts and a couple of times I observed how some that some university students used repetition and memorizing when studying.

The experiences in the secondary schools form the background for the construction of the meaning of the English language later in life. The meaning concerns the concrete meaning of language: what kind of linguistic practices are developed when studying in a language you do not fully master?

#### **7.4 LOI and university**

The use of English on the campus is restricted to a certain place on the campus, the classroom, and outside the classroom, the language dominating the campus is Kiswahili. Torilla Aagot Halvorsen

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<sup>40</sup> The origin of the study techniques which include memorizing can be connected also the need to memorize due to lack of books in primary school. This is described by Okkolin (2013, 125): because there are only 1-2 books to read from available for the whole class, once a pupil got hold of the book, the contents needed to be memorized.



(2009, 320) and George A. Malekela (2003, 109) describe the same situation at the University of Dar Es Salaam. Some students in Puja's (2003; 115, 119-120) study said that speaking English is artificial because there are no real incentives to speak it outside the classroom. One student in my data said that she would like the students to speak more English also outside the class in order to become more fluent in the language and she disapproved that some of the students spoke Kiswahili even in the classroom.

Most of the students in my data said they do not find the LOI problematic at the university level any more and that they like to study in English. However, the problems regarding the LOI at the university level have been a concern at the University of Dar es Salaam already since the 1970s (Halvorsen 2009, 320). This concern has not disappeared in the 21st century: the decreasing general proficiency level in English and the lack of study skills are still major problems of university students. There have been studies and reports at the University of Dar Es Salaam on the language skills of the students but the recommendations are still in favour of continuing with English as the LOI due to reasons like the requirements of the global era and the ICT technology. (Ishumi & al in Halvorsen 2009, 320; Halvorsen 2009; 320, 324.) Halvorsen (2009, 326) claims that the LOI question leads to declining quality of higher education in Tanzania.

The obligatory basic English course, which is offered to all students at SAUT university, was seen as useful by some students while some others considered it as a waste of time. The SAUT English teachers teaching the course said that according to their knowledge and experience the students do not have problems performing their studies due to language issues but rather because of poor self-expression and a poor reading culture.

The desire to know and learn English was connected not only to its symbolic value as the language of education, but also to dreams about further studies and working life. More than half of the students in my data expressed their dream to go abroad to do their masters, and many of them asked about the possibilities of doing studies or finding work in Finland. Arjun Appadurai (1996, 54-55) refers to the role of imagination in ethnographic research – ethnographic study can not refer only to the local any more but has to take into account the larger, imagined possibilities of life, which define the local. These imagined future plans, studies and jobs define the English use in the local setting; English is used on the campus because of other, possible places in the future.

These kinds of dreams about doing the masters abroad have had an influence on the whole LOI



question. Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997, 121-122) claim that some members of the elite have opposed the shift to Kiswahili, because the use of English as the LOI is beneficial for them and their children: The children of the elite keep reproducing their position in the elite of the country because they go to better schools and get the better jobs. Using English as the LOI can enable further studies abroad for the elite and continuation of English as the LOI can ensure these prospective social and economic benefits of English as the LOI for their children.

A concrete problem connected with foreign master programs is the language skills tests needed to be accepted in them. An increasing number of English-language study programs require the students to verify their English proficiency through different kinds of tests (Smit 2010, 40). For Tanzanians applying for studies abroad the TOEFL<sup>41</sup> test is usually required, and the cost of this test is relatively high for an average Tanzanian. Language proficiency requirements can thus form a practical hindrance for the SAUT students to study further in the global world, although the students saw the role of English as a global language as one of the main reasons for English to be the LOI in Tanzania.

English knowledge is an asset in the CV anywhere, but many students said English is important for them because they will hopefully be working in international organizations or companies. It has to be remembered, though, that it is possible that this international aspect of employment could have been emphasized in front of a foreign student. Especially the students of sociology connected the knowledge of English to the benefits it possibly offers on the job market after graduation - most of the students of education naturally thought only of work in the secondary school. There was one exception, the student of education who spoke English also at home (see 7.3): this student interestingly said that English is useful for her because she could find work as a Kiswahili teacher also abroad. Finding work in international organizations was clearly more of a wish and a dream for some of the students, while others already had practical experience in it. Only one student in my data clearly said that Kiswahili would be more important for him in working life because he wants to work in his own country.

These kinds of comments refer to the economic pressure to learn languages associated with better employment opportunities. This phenomenon is not restricted only to European languages – for example in Ethiopia studying in Amharic, the lingua franca in Ethiopia, instead of local languages of the ethnic groups is favoured because it is a way to get better paid work (Simpson 2008, 8). In

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<sup>41</sup> Test Of English as Foreign Language, see <http://www.ets.org/toefl>

Tanzania's neighbouring country, Kenya, Kiswahili has been made a compulsory subject in the education system, which otherwise uses English as the LOI, because most people will be employed in the informal market, where Kiswahili is in practice needed. (Mazrui & Mazrui 1995, 88.)

Nevertheless, getting employed in the informal sector is the reality also for many Tanzanian university students. English is not necessarily needed for making a living, but if you want to have a socially upward position, you can only, or at least mainly, access it through English and education. English knowledge is the kind of capital needed in the contemporary society and it gives power in the Tanzanian society. (Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997, 85; Swilla 1992, 512.)

These dreams are related to a widely discussed problem in many African societies, the general relevance of the university education for the society<sup>42</sup>. First of all the LOI question should be seen in relation to the brain drain -phenomenon, the loss of educated young people into other countries. Campbell & Qorro (1997, 86) write that “*a language policy should not fuel a loss of the country's trained manpower.*” Secondly, Mazrui & Mazrui (1995, 128) write that the use of European languages as the LOI at the universities does have its consequences for the societies it is supposed to serve. Using some other language than the main language of the society in the education system makes education less relevant to the society. The stationery typing practise described in 6.4 is a good example of the contradiction between the reality of the country and the government LOI policies.

In her the article *The education goals – Africa's unfinished business*, Wachira Kigotho emphasizes that there is a need for African tertiary education institutions to pinpoint and teach the students the kind of competences which contribute to the chances to become employed in the home country's society. The importance of social relevance and the quality of the courses in relation to the future of tertiary education in Africa are stressed. This article shows that discussion concerning quality and relevance of tertiary education is thus not restricted only to Tanzania, but is debated on the African continent in general. According to the article, despite the expansion of tertiary education in Africa only around 7% of young people university age continue studies to tertiary level.

#### **7.4.1. Practices of silence**

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<sup>42</sup> For discussion concerning the relevance of (secondary) education for the Tanzanian society, see Posti-Ahokas 2014.

According to my observations, in the university classrooms only few students of the almost 200 present commented on the issues discussed in the class. On certain courses, like the course on gender issues, the lecturer tried to encourage the students to comment and said that they could do it also in Kiswahili, because the issues discussed were so sensitive. I remember one female student told about her experiences of sexual abuse in Kiswahili.

I thought that the lack of eagerness to comment on the topics discussed in the class should be seen in connection the English knowledge of the students or the courage to use English. Many students also told me that some students fear being laughed at when making mistakes in speaking English. In Puja's study, the lecturers interviewed seemed to confirm my impression: they claimed that poor language skills were one reason for silence in the class and for the poor overall academic performance. But the female students interviewed by Puja said that the silence in the class was more a result of fearing the lecturer than the inability to express themselves in English. The silence was not caused only by language issues. (Puja 2003; 15, 123-124.)

The hierarchical position between the lecturers and students can thus cause additional linguistic and communicational problems. Interestingly, lecturers and students switched into Kiswahili outside the classroom, and this most likely reduced the hierarchies between them at least to some extent. I also heard that outside the classroom the students and lecturers discussed issues concerning studies in English, but when the topic changed to more casual and general issues, the language was changed into Kiswahili. This shows how the use of English is strictly tied to the classroom, and this makes the use of English even more artificial. A student I talked with in the SAUT campus cafeteria estimated that only 60% of the lectures at the SAUT are held in English. Although this estimate is very random, it hints that inside the classroom, the lecturers might not always use English either.

When I returned to the campus in 2012 and 2013, 1-2 years after the actual data collection in 2011, I realized that it is actually the lecturers and not the students who have the biggest role in actively and publicly producing English at the campus. Whether they intend it or not, in addition to teaching in English the lecturers are also teaching English and according to my observations, the lecturers were not always providing 100% correct linguistic models for the students to learn from.

I observed that copying the language and expressions used by the lecturer sometimes lead to a phenomenon, which Bourdieu & Passeron (1994; 4-5, 18-19) call 'linguistic misunderstanding.' I understand 'linguistic misunderstanding' as use of scientific concepts and words, if not in an

incorrect, at least in a vague way. On the campus, I observed this misunderstanding in the use of the so-called hypercorrect forms. Hypercorrect forms are sort of exaggerated forms of language use, with which the speakers try to imitate higher varieties of language. This is because the speakers are not sure what the correct norm for pronunciation is, and this can result in over exaggerated non-standard pronunciation in a certain style. (Wolff 2000; 344.) At SAUT I witnessed this phenomenon of exaggerated forms in concepts and words used as well as in the use of complex sentence structures. Wolff (2000; 304) argues that hypercorrect forms can become typical expressions for a social group of speakers; for example university students can be identified as students through the use of the forms.

Hierarchies of language use and hierarchies on the campus can thus create new practices of language use: practices of silence and practices of hypercorrection.

#### **7.4.2. Practices of cramming or claiming the studies**

As described in Chapter 6, the students emphasized that English is needed in order to communicate with different people in the world. Smit (2010, 73-74) writes that for communication to succeed, pronunciation is a very relevant feature. English pronunciation became a relevant issue during my research process; I did not only observe it but experienced the issue myself. As Davies (2008, 88) explains, the process of learning a language can become important data.

I was for a long time confused about the way one English word was used by the SAUT students. I heard many students say that somebody was ‘just claiming’ a subject. This referred to studying something not really in order to understand the issue but rather in order to memorize it for an exam and to pass the course. This kind of ‘claiming’ was a totally new expression to me and after checking in dictionaries, it was apparent that ‘to claim’ indeed does not have a meaning related to learning through memorizing.

I was wondering about this expression already in 2011 but it was not until late 2012 that I happened to ask one of my key informants, whom I later considered as a friend of mine, what the word would be in Kiswahili. I was told it is ‘-kariri’, which means to repeat, to reiterate, to recite, or to rehearse. While wondering out loud about the use of this word by the students, this friend of mine suggested that the English verb is not ‘to claim’, but ‘to cram’. This word was new to me. In the dictionary I found out that ‘to cram’ is a verb which basically means filling, pressing or squeezing, but it also has

another meaning, 'to cram up a subject'. This pointed in the direction that the word 'claim' used by the students is not 'to claim' like I thought, but 'to cram'.

It is quite common that Kiswahili speakers mix the speech sounds L and R<sup>43</sup>. Polome (1967, 210-211) points out in his Swahili handbook that a Kiswahili speaker can have difficulties with the R in English. Like in many Bantu languages, originally also in Kiswahili the speech sounds R and L are a part of the same phoneme and the meaning of the word does not change by changing between the speech sounds R and L. Due to the influence from Arabic, nowadays these speech sounds have become meaningful also in Kiswahili but because most of the local languages of Tanzania are Bantu languages, R and L are still seen as the same phoneme.<sup>44</sup>

These differences in the meaning of the sounds L and R are heard in both Kiswahili and English spoken by Tanzanians. I have observed the phenomenon in Tanzania and talked about it with Tanzanians. Generally it is not taken that seriously, but according to J. Schmied (1990, 128) the L/R feature is stigmatized and ridiculed even by the people themselves who know they make this mistake. Once during a lecture at the SAUT university the lecturer wrote the letters 'L' and 'R' on the blackboard and emphasized the importance of consciously differentiating between them when writing essays or exams. This phenomenon is also visible in pictures 3, 4a and 5.

Considering this the mix with the L and the R, it seemed that I myself had been hearing and wondering about the wrong word all along. Because I so often heard an expression which sounded like 'claim', I am quite convinced that not all of the students necessarily differentiated between the verbs 'cram' and 'claim.' It has to be noted, though, that I have never seen the word in written form, but two students use the word in the interviews. I see that these examples in my data reflect the way I observed the word being used: if the intention is to use word 'cram', it is used randomly with L, R or something in between, and sometimes an 'T' is added in between.

The following quotes are both from these interviews. They are answers to my question about the obligatory French lessons at the university and how the student feels about them. I asked this out of interest to find out how the students found these lessons because in addition to English, French was the other European, colonial language which is taught at the university and had a role in the

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<sup>43</sup> With the sounds L and R I mean the sounds as they are pronounced in Finnish (L dentalveolar or apical alveolar, R as alveolar trill). (Suomi, Toivanen&Ylitalo 2008, 29-30.)

<sup>44</sup> I thank Lotta Aunio, the University Lecturer of Bantu Languages at the University of Helsinki, for providing me the information presented in this paragraph.

linguistic reality of the students. In 15 questionnaires French was mentioned as the language the students knows the least, and many said they would like to know it more.<sup>45</sup>

*... So for me it's [French is] very difficult, although I wish to know it effectively, but the most difficult part for me is to pronounce the words as well as to understand what they mean. But just to write the word is very simple coz we people and most of the Africans people they just **claim** the word before they need to understand what does it mean. So it's difficult for me, coz even if I can pass French with A grade, it does not mean that I understand the subject very well. Maybe I just copy the words. (male, 23, sociology)*

In this quote 'to claim' refers clearly to learning without really understanding and through memorizing. In this interview the pronunciation of the word claim with 'L' is also very clear and the word is emphasized by the speaker. In the following quotes the sound uttered is more somewhere between the L and the R.

*... For me French lessons, to me it's very hard, I'm **just claiming** because you are suppose to do it, you are suppose to manage and do the exams in French. I'm just **claiming**, but I would see, I would like to know it better, maybe for example, in other country they speak French, I would like to. But here we are now taught to claim, not to. (female, 22, education)*

The latter student also used the same verb with approximately the same meaning when talking about how people in Tanzania are very eager to know English.

*... Like I have seen a girl, she was very young, she wanted to speak English, she don't know English, she would **claim** the song even she don't know the meaning.*

These quotes are a good descriptions of the attitude towards the French lessons – many other students I talked to spoke about the French lessons in the same way as these students and many also used the word claim/cram. To me these quotes concretise what I understood as the meaning of the word claim/cram. I had a discussion with a British lecturer working at the SAUT campus and he said that in the transcribed example sentences I showed him from my interviews, the meaning of

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<sup>45</sup> In the questionnaires, also German, Spanish, Latin, Chinese, Arabic, Italian and Finnish were non-African languages mentioned by one or two students as the language they would like to know more.

‘cramming’ was slightly different from the Standard English, and it seem to refer more to not understanding what is being studied than to studying hard.

Puja (2003, 124) uses the word 'cram' when describing the study techniques of the university students (see also 7.3). The informants in Puja's study “ ... said that after copying [the materials from other students or other sources] they cram word for word and later reproduce the same information in a test, home essay or examinations ...”. Puja's informants use the word exactly in the way I understood it. Also one of the women interviewed in Okkolin's study (2013, 142) uses the word 'cram' in connection to studying hard in the secondary school.

Puja (2003, 124-125) writes that due to lack of teaching and learning resources, the students in her study had developed also other survival strategies for their academic studies, for which Kiswahili words like 'kudesa' or 'symbiosis' were developed. These words mean copying material from classmates or other sources. These kinds of strategies were visible also at the SAUT campus: when I arrived there the first time in 2010, several students were expelled due to cheating in exams and serious measures were taken in order to prevent it from happening again. It is possible to see these strategies can be seen as a result of both learning strategies or linguistic practices developed already in the secondary school concerning studying in a language that you do not fully understand.

Whatever verb was meant to be used or heard, I think my confusion about this single word represents a couple of phenomena connected to use of the English language and the campus life. Generally this story naturally reflects the fact that neither myself nor the SAUT students are native English speakers, just like the most people who speak English in the world (Smit 2010, 46.). But as Smit (2010, 56) writes, nowadays English is “owned” by not only the native speakers of it but also by language users, including the ones who use English as a *lingua franca*<sup>46</sup>. In my opinion this makes us quite legitimate English-speakers.

This phenomenon is first of all linked to the communicative role given to English by many of the students and the role of pronunciation in it. Smit (2010, 223-224) writes that any community communicating mainly in English as a *lingua franca* experiences problems of intelligibility and

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<sup>46</sup> Ute Smit (2005, 67 in Smit 2010, 68-69) defines that English is used as a *lingua franca* when it's used as the only common language among people who use it as a second language and who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and when it's used in an area in which English is not used in daily life.

comprehensibility in the early stage of its existence. This intelligibility is often connected to pronunciation because pronunciation features of English used as a lingua franca either allow or hinder mutual intelligibility. (Ibid., 73-74.)

Also Bourdieu (1991, 70) sees that the efficacy of the utterance and the power of its conviction depend primarily on pronunciation and secondarily on vocabulary. Bourdieu continues that when evaluating the social authority and competence of the speaker, linguistic properties like pronunciation are taken into account because they express social authority and competence of the speakers.

Pronunciation in linguistic encounters is not only meaningful for the practical communication but it also has social implications. This issue was also brought up by some students in my data – they said that pronunciation can cause difficulties when learning a new language (usually meaning English), because people from different countries pronounce differently. They referred to their own problems understanding English spoken by foreigners – I know that my way of pronouncing English caused problems for some Tanzanians. The students said that Tanzanians can also pronounce differently which might make it difficult for foreigners to understand the Tanzanian English. Schmied (1990; 125, 130) and Petzell (2012, 142) argue that the main difference in standard and African or Tanzanian English lies in the pronunciation, and that pronunciation is usually connected with the first languages of the speakers.

The students were thus aware of the relevance of pronunciation for communication and they seemed to assume that there is a certain normative way of pronouncing English to which the Tanzanian pronunciation of English was compared. The students also made a clear differentiation between the Tanzanian way of pronunciation and the pronunciation of others. One student commented that Tanzanians pronounce words incorrectly because the level of knowledge of English at schools is so low.

I observed this kind of “localized English” also in written form. The students, and Tanzanians in general, sometimes spelled English more based on pronunciation instead of the correct spelling of English. This type of spelling was closer to the Kiswahili and for example Finnish spelling system, which is based on writing what you “hear” instead of the spelling rules. Blommaert describes this kind of phenomenon of “incorrect writing” as 'grass roots literacy', a widespread phenomenon in Africa and elsewhere where people have restricted literacy repertoire (Blommaert 2010, 85).



According to Blommaert (2010; 85, 90) this type of writing is a local style of writing and it should not necessarily be seen as a sign of insufficient command of basic literacy skills, but more as “a particular, locally constructed and constrained literacy 'culture' with a degree of autonomy”, which contrasts normative literacy (Blommaert 2010; 85).

I would suggest that the SAUT students and Tanzanians have to some extent developed their type of writing English, of English literacy, which includes features of Kiswahili. If this concept could to some degree also be applied to pronunciation, remains to be seen. Something called Swanglish, a mixture of Kiswahili and English, has nevertheless been developed in Tanzania (Petzell 2012, 142; Mwinsheikhe 2003, 139). There are many expressions like ways of greeting, which are common in the English spoken by Tanzanians. They are often translations from Kiswahili and reflect the local ways of life – also Schmied (1990, 126) writes how the extensive use of greetings, for the example common use of 'How are you?', in English spoken in East Africa can reflect the role of greetings in the languages and cultures in the area.

A couple of students in my data use the concept of Kiswanglish:

Q: Have the studies made one language more or less important than before? Please explain which language and why?

A: *Kipare – sababu wanaongeeji ni wachache na watu wengi hutumia Kiswanglish.*

Kipare – because there are few speakers and many people use Kiswanglish.

(female, 26, sociology)

This discussion about pronunciation and spelling of English can be seen as a part of a wider discussion concerning language varieties and varieties of English. Foreign-accent English is in general tolerated well but the attitudes towards non-native varieties of English can be less positive: native speakers of English do not like to see their language being decayed by non-natives (Kachru 1980 in Saviile-Troike 1989, 193.) Regional variants of a language, or the popular use of the official language, are often seen as incorrect language, and these linguistic differences are often associated also with social differences (Bourdieu 1991, 54).

This Tanzanian way of speaking and writing English can be seen as a linguistic practice developed in Tanzania; the typical ways in which English is used and seen in the Tanzanian society. In the contradictory situation reflecting the colonial history, global pressures and the domestic policies, the

students produce linguistic practices relevant in the Tanzanian context. What English means for the students and for Tanzania is revealed by setting it into the local context, with the local special features and ways of use. For example, it is much easier to understand Tanzanian English after one is aware of the phonological L/R feature – one starts to listen to what the words might mean in a different way.

## **7.5 Summary**

The students make English meaningful through its use as the LOI in the education system. Although the first contact with English is in primary school, the relationship the students have with English is mainly formed during the secondary schooling. Learning in English is often learning English, and many students described their experiences of learning difficulties and coercion regarding language use in the beginning of the secondary school. These experiences have a strong influence on what kind of attitude the students have towards English and what kinds of linguistic practices they developed.

The meanings the students give to English as the LOI are both symbolic and practical. Through its use as the LOI, English has become a symbol for post-primary education and for the educated, international elite in Tanzania. The symbolic position of English is emphasized by the practical difficulties the students described as the barrier to adopting Kiswahili as the LOI for the whole education system. Although the position of English is also criticized by the students, the symbolic position of English forms the background in which the students make the language meaningful for themselves.

In practice English as the LOI can mean dishonest study techniques developed in order to cope with the requirements of the education system. It can also mean additional hierarchies between the ones who know English and the ones who do not, not only in the society in general, but also on the campus. There hierarchies can be developed between students and lecturers as well as students with different educational backgrounds. These hierarchies reflect the hierarchies between the languages and can lead to hierarchical linguistic practices.

For many students, the use of English as the LOI in Tanzania means dreams of work opportunities in international companies and possibilities of master studies abroad. The reality nevertheless is that

English as the LOI in Tanzania does not automatically provide access to global communication; to be able to apply for international master programs, a certificate of the level of knowledge of English is needed. The students are aware of what accent and pronunciation can mean for global communication, and because of this they possibly value their own way of speaking English less.

Despite the critique expressed towards the use of English as the LOI, many students see that the use of English as the LOI is somehow indispensable. English is just more important than Kiswahili in the global world and this global world can be accessed by the Tanzanians through the use of English in the education.

This is in big contrast with the practical life and the Tanzanian linguistic reality, and in order to make English meaningful also in the local context, local ways of using the language have been developed. The students in this study have developed their own kinds of linguistic practices for English as the LOI. It can be keeping quiet, or trying to produce almost too correct a language. The students localize English in the very specific context of the university campus, where certain words (like *cr/lamming*) mean things they otherwise would not directly refer to. This kind of localization of English is visible in the special features of pronunciation and writing English in Tanzania. It is also visible in the social meaning of the language and the social differences and stratification it produces.

Understanding the reasons behind these kinds of practices and especially understanding what is meant by them, can only be achieved by seeing how they are embedded in the local, sociolinguistic context. Both Swilla (1992, 513) and Blommaert (2010, 100) write that sociolinguistic reality is more complex than just contrasting the local languages with the international ones. Just like the different roles of the African and foreign languages should not be seen as competing opposites to each other, but rather as complementary (Swilla 1992, 513), the different meanings the students see for the languages complement each other. English in Tanzania has both global and local meanings and this is how the linguistic habitus, the common understanding concerning English, and the linguistic practices of using the language, should be seen.

Blommaert (2010, 194) claims that the meaning of English in the Tanzanian linguistic reality is predominately local. The way English is used in Tanzania can lose its potential when moved out of the country. Despite the use of English in the education system you are not automatically proficient

in it in the global world. Rephrasing Blommaert (2010, 194), the particular use of a particular form of English in Tanzania might not make you into an international businessman, but it can make you a successful stationery shopkeeper in Tanzania. Tanzania's practical possibilities to influence the global processes and policies are limited, although these global processes determine the value of linguistic resources. This is what according to Blommaert (2010, 194) produces real inequality.

Picture 3



This picture from Malimbe campus shows the one of the main roads on the campus. This road leads to many classrooms from the main bus stop. On the left from this dust road is the department of sociology and on the right hand side the guest house in which many visitors and foreigners are living in. The people in the pictures are random students.

The text on the sign with black background says

*Barabara hii imefungwa huko mbele.*

This road is closed ahead.

This picture captures the use of Kiswahili for everyday messages which everybody needs to understand. Street signs like this are written in Kiswahili in the whole of Tanzania. At the university there are people moving on this road who do not study at the university, for example cleaners and

other workers or people who live nearby. With this I want to emphasize that the campus is not a closed space for only people who speak English, but signs like these need to be also in Kiswahili.

The paper which is taped on the sign with the white background says

*New!! original scientific calculator fx-991 mx @ 23000 /=*

*DOSAM STATIONARY*

*Nyamalango street*

*Phone 0764406132*

*Come, check and buy one!*

It is an advertisement of a new calculator, which is available at the Dosam stationery at Nyamalango Street nearby. First it has to be noted that the word for this little bookshop should be 'stationery' instead of 'stationary' – this common spelling error is discussed in Chapter 6.4.

That the calculator is original, refers to the common, cheaper Chinese copies available in Tanzania. The price of the calculator, 23 000 Tanzanian shillings, is about 10 Euros. This is equivalent to approximately about 35 bus rides within the city of Mwanza or about 8 meals at the campus.

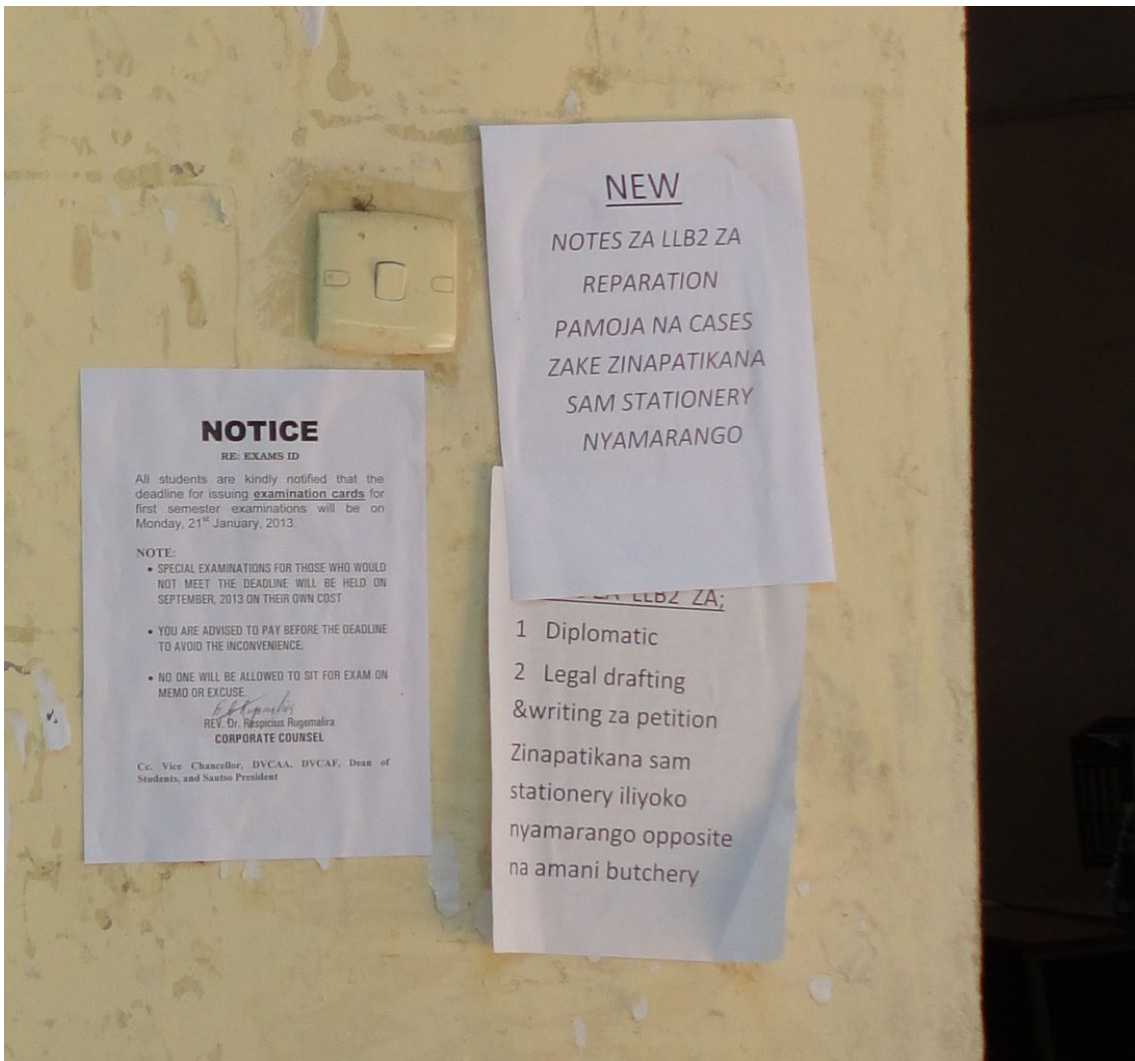
The advertisement the 'scientific calculator' is clearly directed only to students of subjects like accounting or engineering. The use of English in this advertisement defines the target group which is different from the one in the phone advertisement in Picture 1: this message is not for all Tanzanians but only for the ones who know English. The calculator advertisement thus concretises the differentiation of English-speaking people from the “common” Tanzanians. This is emphasized by the use of the word 'scientific:' the calculator is meant for scientific people, who know English.

The photograph shows a wall with several posters and notices. On the left, there is a poster for 'BONJOUR HECHÉ DRY CLEANER' with contact information. Below it is a poster for 'UKICHANGIA DAMU LEO KESHO INAWeza KUKUSADIA WEWE, FAMILIA NA JAMII' featuring a man in a blue shirt. To the right of this is a poster for 'LAKE ZONE BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE' with handwritten notes in Swahili. Further right is a 'NOTICE' from the 'NEW' stationery shop. Below the 'NOTICE' is a small poster for 'DIPLOMATIC' services. The wall is light-colored and shows signs of wear.

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Picture 4a



On the hand left side, there is an official notification from the university administration about the examination cards, which the students need in order to be allowed to take their exams. To get these cards, the students need to pay their study fees. This note is written in a very official tone of voice in English.

On the right hand side, there are two notifications about the availability of the study materials at a stationery (this practice is described in 6.4). The purpose of these notifications is to inform the students at which stationery the lecturer has left the study materials to be copied by the students.

The upper notification:

**NEW**

**Notes za LLB2 za reparation pamoja na cases zake zinapatikana Sam stationery**



## **Nyamarango.**

= Notes of LLB2 of reparation together with their cases are available in Sam stationery in Nyamarango.

Because I do not know the context, in which this notification is written and to which subject/course it is related, I cannot really comment on what is meant by this note or the 'course' or the 'cases.' But there is abundant code mixing in this text: 'notes', 'reparation', 'cases', 'stationery' are all English words inserted in a Kiswahili -structured sentence. This time the word 'stationery' is spelled correctly.

According to my knowledge, the street where the stationery is located is called Nyamalango, but in contrast to the example in Picture 3, the name of the street is now spelled as Nyamarango. I am not sure if the official name of the street is Nyamalango or Nyamarango, because there are no street signs and this is just the name commonly used for the street. The name I was taught and used is Nyamalango. Whatever the actual name of the street is, this is again an example of the interchangeability of the L and R as described in 7.4.2.

### The lower notification:

#### **1. Diplomatic**

#### **2. Legal drafting&writing za petition**

**zinapatikana Sam stationery iliyoko nyamarango opposite na amani butchery**

= 1. Diplomatic

2. Legal drafting&writing of petition

are available at Sam stationery which is at Nyamarango opposite Amani Butchery.

There is little new about this notification, most likely it has been posted on the wall before the one analysed above. 'Writing za petition' is an interesting case of code-mixing because only the preposition 'of' is replaced with a Kiswahili preposition; this emphasizes that the structure is in Kiswahili while all the words are in English. The street name is again spelled as 'Nyamarango.'

As a curiosity: 'amani' means peace or security in Kiswahili: the butchery is thus called the peace/security butcher.

Picture 4b



To the left of the more official notifications is an advertisement with a picture. The ad encourages to donate blood and it is written in Kiswahili.

**Ukichangia damu leo kesho inaweza kukusaidia wewe, familia na jamii.**

**Pamoja tunaweza okoa maisha.**

= If you donate blood today, tomorrow it can help you, your family and the society.

Together we can save lives.

Below there is a piece of paper where the next possibility to donate blood is announced: 13/14 December. This advert is yet another example of the practical life in Kiswahili versus the official university activities in English.

Picture 4c



Above the blood donation advertisement is an advertisement from the Bonjour Heche Dry Cleaner, which is available at the Rufiji Street opposite the Florida hotel. Like the calculator advertisement in picture 3, this is again an advertisement of a new technology which is clearly directed to people who know English. Also otherwise this advertisement seems to be directed to the better-off Tanzanians - I personally have not heard of any Tanzanian who has a dry cleaner. Therefore I would see that a machine is directed to the better-off people, and it is possible that the person who put this advertisement on the wall at the university thought that there are many well-off people on the campus? I see the connection of this advertisement to the ideas about university education in the Tanzanian society: it is something connected with the prosperous standard of life and the ability to buy, for example, dry cleaners.

Picture 5



This picture continues the same theme as the previous one: it is a book advertisement on a noticeboard on the campus. It is again a product with a special discount targeted at English-speaking university students.

### University promotion!!!!

**Pata kitabu chako kipya.**

= Get your new book.

**title: Guidelines for success at college/university level**

**Price Tsh 4000 only (with 33.3% discount rate)**

**Place: main campus (container)**

**Marimbe-magazeti**

The advertisement was placed on the “official”, glazed notice board – the glass reflects my profile and the green area in front of the building. The fact that the advertisement was put on this “official” notice board means that it is placed there by somebody from the university administration. These kind of self-help books are popular in Tanzania. The advertisement is surrounded by more or less official notifications and a cutting from a newspaper. The book is available either at the main campus in a container shop or the Magazeti shop in Malimbe. This is an example of the interchangeability of the L and the R described as in 7.4.2: Malimbe is spelled with an R although the correct name for the area is Malimbe.

## 8. The place of the mother tongue

In this chapter I look into what the local languages mean for the students. First I analyse the meanings through how the students use the concept of 'mother tongue' and after that I relate the meanings to the concept of 'home place.'

The students have various, mixed and haphazard ethnic backgrounds. Some students share a common ethnic background or at least speak the same local languages, and this can be at least partially explained by the size of the ethnic group. The most prominent example is Sukuma, the biggest ethnic group in Tanzania. The different languages mentioned by the students are shown in Table 1.

I start this chapter with a quote that is a good example of the complexity of the situation concerning the use of the local languages in Tanzania. Before this dialogue the student and me talked about the student's level of knowledge of the local language and she told she did not know either the language of her mother's or father's tribe very well.

*I: Do you think you don't know the [local] language so well because your parents are different tribe or just because of practicalities?*

*S: I don't think it's because my mother knows the language as well and my father knows the language of my mother, so they both speak the languages. But I don't know the language because we don't live in our own community any more, like we transferred to live somewhere else. So when we are in other community you don't speak the language because you meet different people so all of you speak Swahili. So since we were young our friends were not from our tribe so we speak in Swahili, and our parents are friends with people that are not from their tribe so they all speak Swahili. They speak their language only when they want to speak very privately, that's it. So it's not the language we speak. But like my, I have uncles that are living in a village and they have their children, they all know the language because they are from one place. So I don't speak because it's not the language we speak at home. "*

(female, 23, sociology)

In general this quote shows that the knowledge of a local language can depend on multiple factors and situations. It also shows that learning the local language is not always a question of not having the chance for it, but it can be more connected with the practical, social situation. The difference between the linguistically more homogeneous rural life and the more urban lifestyle is also evident

in this quote. The private relationship to the language the students refers to is further analysed in the following chapter.

**Table 1: the languages of the ethnic groups mentioned by the students**

| <b>The name of the language</b><br>based on the name of the language the students gave it | <b>number of students</b><br>mentioned competence in the language |
|---|---|
| <u>Kibena</u>   | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kichagga</u>   | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kifipa</u>   | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kihaya</u>   | <u>3</u>  |
| <u>Kihangaza</u>  | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kihehe</u>   | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kijita</u>   | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kikerewe</u>   | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kikurya</u>  | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kiluo</u>  | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kimasai</u>  | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kingoni</u>  | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kinyambo</u>   | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kinyakusa</u>  | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kipangwa</u>   | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kipare</u>   | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kirangi</u>  | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kisambaa</u>   | <u>2</u>  |
| <u>Kisukuma</u>   | <u>7</u>  |
| <u>“Ugandan” (most likely refers to Baganda language spoken in Uganda)</u>                | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Shona language (Zimbabwe)</u>  | <u>1</u>  |
| <u>Kinyarwanda (Rwanda)</u>   | <u>1</u>  |

## 8.1 The meaning of the mother tongue

Many aspects of the contemporary position of the local languages and their meaning in the society are summarized in the following quote. The background for this quote is that I had just found out that this student's parents were from the Sukuma tribe, but because the family did not live in the Sukuma area they did not speak Kisukuma with the children at home. Nevertheless the student says she is fluent in Kisukuma, and my question to her was if it had been difficult for her to learn the language.

I: *You don't find, you said you are fluent in Sukuma [language] but you didn't live in this area, so did it make Sukuma difficult for you or is it just easy?*

S: *No, it is easy because it's my mother tongue. Once I go there, the way they speak, I understand them, I hear them, the way they speak, maybe to respond. I'd add some words but I know a bit, it's not difficult for me.* (female, 22, education)

The answer first of all reveals that although the student understands the language well, she is not always able to respond when she is addressed to in Kisukuma – this was confirmed also later on in the interview. Rudolph C. Troike (1970, in Saville-Troike 1989, 23) uses the term 'receptive competence' for this kind of competence: in multilingual communities members are often able to understand many languages, but not actively produce (speak, write) them all because often only a shared receptive competence is needed for successful communication. Eva-Marie Ström (2013, 40) calls children who have only receptive competence of a language 'receptive bilinguals', with which she according to my interpretation means that they can understand more than one language as L1 but not necessarily speak as fluently as they understand it. According to my observation, this kind of receptive competence is common in Tanzania and it is linked with the dominative position of Kiswahili in the country: because of Kiswahili, many of the Tanzanian citizens do not have the possibility or need to give the local languages the kind of full attention required for a full competence of the language.

The main point of interest in this quote is the way the student uses the concept 'mother tongue.' She said that the language is easy, *because* it is the mother tongue – while in practice it seems that she does not speak it perfectly and she could “*add some words*” (increase the amount of vocabulary known, direct translation from Kiswahili). Interestingly, many other students in my data said that they did know the local language, *although* it was their mother tongue. This raises the question: what do the students mean when they speak about the mother tongue?



As Legère (2002, 165) and Wolff (2000, 320-321) describe, usually the term 'mother tongue' refers to the language a person has learned as the first language (L1) as a child and in which a person feels he can express him/herself the best. It is usually the language spoken in the community in which the child is born. (See also 1.4.) This is the perception I have always had of a mother tongue, but in the Tanzanian society I was encountered with something else. 'Mother tongue' seemed often to refer to the language used for intra-group communication within (an ethnic) community and not necessarily to the knowledge of the language. The mother tongue, the local language of the ethnic group, can especially in the Tanzanian countryside be the L1, but more and more Tanzanians speak Kiswahili as the L1.

Also for most of the students in my data, and generally in the discussion in Tanzania, the language defined as the mother tongue does not refer to the L1 or the most language a person speaks most fluently. This general understanding is reflected in the following quote from a questionnaire:

*My national language is Kiswahili but I don't know my mother tongue.*

(male, 26, sociology)

From the students I interviewed, only a couple had spent most of their childhood in the rural homelands of their tribe and learned the local language as L1. The questionnaires supported this impression from the interviews: only in six out of the 33 questionnaires the local language was mentioned among the languages the student knew the best. In 11 questionnaires, no local language was mentioned among all the languages the student knew.

Many students describe the mother tongue as a language they should know, but actually know very little. Some students said openly or even emphasized that they know the mother tongue only a little bit or not at all, while some others, like the student quoted in the beginning of this section, assured me that they were fluent in the local language. A couple of students mentioned that they would like to learn the local language in order to be able to communicate with the people from the home village. Legère (2002, 169) points out that the use of the local languages is moved into the informal domains of communication among (extended) family members or into traditional functions and ceremonies in the village. Ström (2013, 40) writes that because there are few incentives to use the local language, the domains in which the local languages are used, are decreasing all the time.

Some students were clearly a bit ashamed because of not knowing their mother tongue adequately.



Therefore the importance of these languages might have been downplayed or ignored a bit in the interviews and questionnaires. But unlike the Tanzanians in Ström's study, the students did not at least openly complain that their parents had not taught them the mother tongue. One student said, though, that her parents think she does not know the language at all and therefore never speak it to her although she actually does know it a bit. The following description by Ström (2013, 34) concerning teaching the mother tongue to the children in the local community she studied, is most likely tenable in Tanzania in general:

”Several of the children complain about how their parents have neglected to teach them the L1 although they would like to learn it. At the same time many adults complain about the children not knowing the language.”

These attitudes reflect a lack of practical situations for using the local language. But as Ström (2013, 38) describes, the attitudes towards the local languages are very ambivalent: the languages are said to be important, but in the reality their future does not matter that much. This kind of attitudes are most likely also related to the way the local languages are portrayed in the society.

There was only one student who in the interview refused to tell me what his ethnic background is, although it is usually disclosed without much hesitation – a quote from his interview is analysed in 5.1. Like some other students in my data, this student clearly connected knowledge of the local language negatively to tribalism (see 2.3.)

In the end it turned out that like the student quoted in the beginning of this chapter, some of those, who said they know their mother tongue, are nevertheless not able to express themselves perfectly freely and fluently in that language. Although for most students this was caused by never really learning the language perfectly, a couple of students said that the reason for this was not using the language regularly and losing touch with changes and, for example, the new expressions which appear in every language from time to time. Ström (2013, 40) writes about the influence of Kiswahili and education system on the local languages: “After entering school, the development of L1 competence among the children who have learned this language in early childhood is almost completely brought to a standstill.” Ström (2013, 40) also points out that because the local languages are used nowhere in the education system, their meaning for the society remains marginal and threatened.

The way the term ‘mother tongue’ is used by the students seems to refer more to the importance and

position of the language for their own origin than to the practical use or knowledge of it. Nevertheless, for most students the language represents something they respect and some even miss. One student of sociology, who had learned the local language as his L1, described the meaning of the language for him:

*... you dream in your local language, you sing in your local language.*

(male, 27, sociology)

The impression I got from the interview was that for this student the language is symbolic both personally and in relation to the group identity - also Petzell (2012b, 21) encountered the meaning of the local languages for the identity of the tribes. It should be considered, though, that this kind of talk about the symbolic value of the mother tongue can also be the way the students have learned to describe the local languages. The students might also think that in a situation with a foreigner interviewing them this is what they are expected to say about the local languages. It is possible that the local languages are supposed to be important and therefore they are portrayed as such, because they form the origin of the Tanzanians – but in practice they just do not seem to mean that much.

## **8.2 The home place**

The reason for choosing to use the concept of 'local language' for describing the mother tongues is that these languages seem to be quite strongly connected with a certain place. The “original” or “indigenous” location of the families seemed to be important for the construction of the meaning of the local language. Most parents of the students in the data had chosen to speak mainly Kiswahili to the children, but there were various practical solutions about teaching the language(s) of the tribe(s) of the parents. Many parents of students who had grown up in an urban area had just given up on teaching the local language in the urban setting, sometimes even if they had the same tribal background and knew the same local language (cf. Rubagumya 1990, 9). This is interesting, because it is precisely the home domain that has been the main domain for the use of the local language. Ström (2013, 40) describes how due to the children's lack of knowledge of the local language makes Kiswahili penetrate also into the home domain. Also Petzell's (2012b, 20) and Puja's (2003, 115) studies confirm the use of Kiswahili also in the home domain, and if Kiswahili hasn't penetrated the home, Petzell (2012b, 20) study shows how code-mixing between local language and Kiswahili is very common.

Petzell (2012b, 22) found out that the parents most likely speak the local language to the children in the rural villages rather than in towns. Many students in my data described that they use and hear the mother tongue only when visiting the village(s) where the family members come from – the

local language of the village was thus entirely differentiated from the everyday life.

The locality of the languages was emphasized when I found out that there were also students who had learned the local language of the place of residence instead of their “own” mother tongue. Some students had learned the language of only one parents usually because of living in the area where the parent came from. There were also a couple of students who knew more than one local language fluently: one of the parents and one of the surroundings. One student explained how he learned the language of the place of residence and not that of the parents, and because this local language happened to be related to the mother’s mother tongue, he also learned to understand the mother's language to some extent.

Learning the language of the ethnic group of the place of residence might be connected to the local socio-economic benefits gained through the knowledge of the language or the local prestige connected to the language (Ström 2013, 33). Also Simpson (2008, 23-24) argues that African languages can be more prestigious in certain communication contexts, which are often more informal. A linguistically homogeneous environment makes it more likely that the local language is learned (Ström 2013, 39). Location can thus determine the knowledge of a language more than the family background. One student described the local languages he knows but which are not his own mother tongues as *pleasure languages* learned at the place of residence. This comment might imply that the local languages can be learned out of one's own interest and the joy of learning, not because they are supposed or needed to be known.

In the quote that started this chapter, the student describes the language as a ‘way of speaking.’ The expression ‘to hear somebody’ is a direct translation from Kiswahili which means to understand somebody; it can also mean to feel or sense something or someone. A possible analysis of this expression could be that it refers to understanding the place and the people, and the possible ability to respond to their way of life. What speaking the language means to this student is thus more or less metaphorical; it signals that she understands the meaning of speaking the language and that the meanings which are important in the community in question are concretised in the linguistic expressions. This expression becomes even more interesting when it is seen in the light of the fact that the student does not speak the local language perfectly.

The location of the language was emphasized by the use of the expression 'the home place.' Like many Tanzanians speaking in English, also the students used this expression quite frequently. 'Home place' refers to the area where the person comes from, usually the village where the relatives live in

or where a person has grown up as a child. Many students said that there is the need and opportunity to use the mother tongue only when they travel to the home place, often only once or twice a year, for example, at Christmas time.

Most of the students in my data have never lived in the villages their grandparents or other relatives are live in. Yet practically all of the students connected the mother tongue to these rural villages – the language is a very important representation of the place where they are from, their home and origin. Jerman (1997, 281) writes about the relation between ethnic identity and locality, the environment. Ethnic identity presupposes the relationship between people and locality, which can be manifested, among others, in the form of rituals, common history and feeling of oneness (Ibid., 281). Petzell (201, 141) points out that on the local level the local languages can “*function as a marker of solidarity.*”

The emphasis of the home village shows that there is still a connection between local languages and the rural area, and that ethnicity and the use of language are still to some extent connected to the geographic area in Tanzania. This might still reflect the administrative policies of the colonial era, described in 2.3. The socialist government attempted to downplay ethnic identity among other things through the Ujamaa villagization (Ujamaa wa Vijijini) policies in the 1960s and 1970s. The Ujamaa villages were a part of the collectivization policies of the state and in the 1960s many Tanzanians were first encouraged to live in them and in the 1970s more or less forced to live in them. In the Ujamaa villages different people from different areas were gathered to form new socialist communities, in which the socialist language Kiswahili was supposed to be spoken. The language of the ethnic groups was not supposed to be used. The villagization project nevertheless remained quite superficial and truly interethnic villages were quite exceptional. Kiswahili became more of an additional language and through that the villagization project might actually have contributed to the development of the multilingualism in Tanzania. (Blommaert 2010; 36, 38; Lyimo 2012, 57-59; Topan 2008, 258.)

The local languages thus seem to be the dominant languages of the villages, although it was apparent that the relatives of the students in the villages also spoke Kiswahili. Kiswahili is nowadays needed for communication in the rural area more so than previously, because the new, urban generation the students in my data are a part of, does not necessarily know the local languages.

In practice the village setting seems to be quite distant for most of the students, but images of the

village as the home place or “our soil” are very clear in the students' expressions. Aghil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992, 612) describe how this kind of meaning given to distinctive places for the identity of nations and ethnicities is related to how spaces are made into meaningful places for imagined communities. Blackledge & Creese (2010, 31-32) write that people might explain that a language is important for the identity but these kinds of meanings of languages should be seen merely as imaginary inventions, which are created to remember the old homelands. John Lonsdale (in Jerman 1997, 51) claims that especially in Africa ethnicities are often imagined.

Jerman (1997, 302) suggests that, based on how tribes were presented in the colonial times in Tanzania, they are differentiated from each other through the “shared and imagined reality for people”. Appadurai (1996, 54-55) argues that realities are then manifested in language and different kinds of borders dividing the space. I see that these imagined realities or places can be seen in the way the students associate meanings of the local languages with a certain place. Although in practice these symbolic places are, for different reasons, rarely visited, they function as a link between social life and imagination

The local languages are naturally also used in towns; a couple of students in my data said they sometimes meet with other people from the same tribe either on the campus or in town. Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 128; 1995, 3) write that ethnic loyalty can still be strong in the urban setting and the meetings in town are organized not only in order to speak the language of the tribe, but also in order to assist each other. One student said that he sometimes meets some members of his tribe in town and ... *sometimes we meet, we speak, discussing some matters concerning the tribe, that's all.*

This student said that some ethnic groups meet on the campus and speak the language. It seems that the also local languages are present on the campus.

All in all, ‘place’ is thus an important factor in the linguistic practices the students connect to the local languages. Ashcroft (2001, 159) suggests that in relation to the concept of habitus, ‘place’ can be seen more as a practise than as a concrete, geographical location. For the students of this study, especially the place or location connected to the local language, or any of the other languages, can thus be seen as a practise of using the language. Kevin A. Yelvington (1987, in: Keese 2010, 25) goes even further by suggesting that ethnic affiliation as a whole could be seen as a practice, which is used in a given situation.

### 8.3 Ethnicity and society

There are some students who criticized the weak role and position of the local languages in Tanzanian societies. These students often said the competence in the mother tongue has decreased since they started to study at the university. One student wrote that because of studies English has become important while the

*mother tongue which we know very well perform nothing.* (male, 22, sociology)

Another student wrote that

*though Kichagga is my mother tongue language but it comes to seem non-sense or nothing because here in our university we speak only Kiswahili and English.* (female, 21, sociology)

Like some children in Ström's (2013, 34) study, also two students in my data expressed explicitly that they did not like local language(s) because they were spoken only in a small area and were helpful neither for studies nor for national or international communication. The unofficial status of the local languages is also visible: one student writes that *vernacular [languages] are not accepted officially*. None of the students connected the local languages to any kind of dreams about the future or possibilities to get a job. Comments like these signal how little local languages can mean in practical life. Prah (2003, 17-18, 21) writes that due the way in which the European languages are presented, there is already a lack of interest to learn the local languages in some African countries.

Ström (2013; 35, 42) describes a 'vicious circle' caused by the low status of the local languages in the society that has been formed by behaviour within and from the outside the ethnic community. The low status of the local language can become a reason to prefer the use of Kiswahili, which can then result in less frequent use of the local language, and this again can increase the use of Kiswahili. The attitudes from within the language community are most important for the survival of the language, but they can be rather ambivalent, too. In Ström's (2013, 38) study the informants expressed how important the local language was for the ethnic community and the cultural identity, but in practice the future of the language did not seem very important to the speakers. Thus although the local language can mean a lot for the community members, in practice its value might not be emphasized enough. This can become a threat for the survival of the languages of the ethnic groups.

Therefore it seems that as Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 128; 1995, 3) claim, the urbanization process and the dominant role of Kiswahili has for its own part weakened the importance of the ethnic rituals and customs in Tanzania. But this weakening importance does not necessarily include the weakening of the ethnic loyalty and identity, because nowadays tribes and tribal identity are not necessarily determined by the use of a certain language as the mother tongue (Lègere (2002, 165-166; Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 18). This is reflected in the talk of the students, although there are also cases in which language knowledge is very strongly linked to knowledge of the local language (see example in 5.1).

In other words, having parental roots in a specific ethnic group, possessing a consciousness of belonging to the group or being born in the traditional area of the group can be enough for a person to identify him/herself as part of the ethnic group in question. In addition, knowledge of a language, even as L1, does not always imply ethnic identity associated with the language. (Lègere 2002, 165-166.) Ethnic identity thus does not always coincide with language knowledge, also because like the students in my data, it's possible to know other languages than that of one's own ethnic group.

Mazrui & Mazrui (1995; 2, 12) argue that although Kiswahili has contributed to the process of detribalization in Tanzania, ethnic consciousness is not necessarily weakening at the moment but it might be actually increasing. Despite the weakening of ethnic behaviour as far as customs, ritual and rules are concerned, in the process of shifting into a more urban. modern way of life the emotional attachment and loyalty to a group can grow stronger. Ethnic conscience and loyalty are not necessarily disappearing as such, but are more absorbed into the web of other loyalties concerning, for example, nation, religion or social class.

## **8.4 Summary**

It is apparent that the position of the local languages in Tanzania is not very strong and they are used less and less every day. The students strongly connect mother tongues to the rural area and the place of origin. This place seems to be more or less imaginative and symbolic for some students, although some of the students have more concrete connection to the area and have learned the local language as L1.

The students tend to speak about the languages in a certain, more or less uniform way, which can be seen as a reflection of not only the practical situation concerning the languages, but what Pierre Bourdieu calls the linguistic habitus. The fact that the students so strongly connect the practices of

using the local language to a certain, more or less concrete place can be seen as linguistic practice they have developed for using and talking about the local languages.

But despite this somewhat marginalized position of the local languages in Tanzania and especially on the SAUT university campus, ethnic identity seems to be important for the students in my data. Whether the students access the local language by visiting the village, knowing that the parents were born in the village or even speaking just a few words of the language, is not the main issue. The traditional connection between ethnic identity and knowledge of the language seems to be broken to some extent: knowing only a few words of one's own mother tongue can make the students feel that they can communicate with their origin. According to Bourdieu's (1991, 167) argument, languages show their power through the communicative role they have in the society. In the case of the local languages in Tanzania, communication with the ethnic origin can be seen as the way the mother tongues show their power and place in the society.

## **9. In conclusion**

In this master thesis, an ethnographic description about the multilingual reality of one African state, Tanzania. I have looked into the common ways of thinking and processes of meaning-making concerning languages and the linguistic practices which my informants have developed in the linguistic reality of the country. I have connected the meanings they give to the historical and social developments in the Tanzanian society. As theoretical framework I have used Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of linguistic habitus and linguistic practice. I have also bound the talk of the students to the question of the symbolic role of languages in societies.

In this chapter I look into what kinds of conclusions can be made on the basis of this study.

### **9.1 The domains of the practices**

Choosing which language to use is meaningful because in the Tanzanian society languages have symbolic significance. The university students are aware of the social implications that using a language has - that it among other can imply the level of education, ethnic background or social position. The students connect the different languages to social and societal phenomena like education, globalization, colonization, ethnic or national identity and locality.

On a personal level, the students balance between the individual desire to need to be connected to



the origin and home village through the local language, the pragmatic linguistic situation as urban Tanzanians speaking Kiswahili, and the attractive possibility to participate in the global world through the use of English (cf. Mazrui & Mazrui 1998, 139-140).

The meaning of the languages for the students is thus constructed both on the individual and social level. In the concept of linguistic habitus, the importance of the different social, political and historical processes behind the language use merge with the individual situation of the students. Reflections of this linguistic habitus can be seen in the talk of the students.

Basically the students seem to use the languages according to the social situation and the domain of language use. Petzell (2012a, 141) and Simpson (2008, 24) argue that in African societies, domains imply the plurality of linguistic identities and this is most likely the true also in this case. This plurality has lead to the students to developing different linguistic practices of language use in different situations. In the university classroom, English is used in its special linguistic and social form but when stepping outside the classroom, the practice is to change the language into Kiswahili. The chosen linguistic practice is not always connected to the social situation but can also be connected to the level of knowledge of the language.

But as Mazrui & Mazrui claimed already in 1998 (139-140), the situation is changing. In the whole of Africa languages are pervading into different domains and overlapping in function - linguistic convergence is more and more common. Economical and political processes, urbanization, inter-ethnic marriages, cultural change and social interaction change the positions of the languages and through that the linguistic practices. Mazrui & Mazrui (1998, 139-140) claim that nowadays pragmatic issues influence the every-day language use more than ideological reasons, and this is one of the reasons why languages merge and mix especially in urban areas. Despite the somewhat ideological background concerning the use of Kiswahili, the students' talk make it clear that this is also happening in Tanzania.

In other words, despite the seeming division of the languages into their own domains, it might not be fully truthful to divide the language use of the students into different domains. The students might know the language they are "supposed" to use in a certain social context, but due to different reasons concerning for example the topic of the discussion, competence in language or the social situation might influence the language choice more than the "actual domain." Students mix languages and use them in several domains – expressions from different languages can be code-mixed into the talk in another language. The choice for inserting expressions from a different

language sometimes denotes something symbolic while sometimes it is just based on more or less conscious, pragmatic improvising.

These practices of code-mixing and -switching occur especially in connection with the dominant Kiswahili. Like many examples in this thesis show, it is more common that English is code-mixed into Kiswahili talk than the other way around. Although mixing between the local languages and Kiswahili does not occur in the data of this study, based on my experience in Tanzania throughout the years, I know that this form of code-mixing is also common – this is also confirmed by Petzell (2012a; 140, 142).

In other words, the domains of language use aren't as straight-forward as it first might seem. Therefore I see that the concept of linguistic practice might be better than the concept of domain to describe how the students handle their language use. Negotiations between different constraints and incentives to use certain languages in certain situations and one's own personal situation and competence form varying sorts of multilingual practices. The students construct and validate their linguistic identities through the linguistic practices available to them, and these practices are what make the languages meaningful for the students (Blackledge & Creese 2010; 37, 40).

Blackledge & Creese (2010; 37, 40) write that through seeing the language use as multilingual practice it is possible to see how language use is socially and politically embedded in the linguistic and social reality. In addition, it enables seeing how linguistic practices can become the basis for social differentiation and through that reinforce social stratification – how some linguistic practices are more valuable than others (Blackledge & Creese 2010, 24; Saville-Troike 1989, 35). Seeing the language use of the students as linguistic practices shows how inevitably the language use is connected to social differentiation and the material conditions of the society. The use of Kiswahili in Tanzania has created ostensible social equality in the country but through analyzing the linguistic practices of the students in this study, it is possible to see how especially use of English creates social inequality.

## **9.2 Recommendations**

Following the tradition of ethnography of communication, in this study I have tried to combine the local empiric approach of life on the campus with bigger issues of ideology and symbolic meanings in society on a wider scale. Any conclusions drawn in this study reflect the linguistic multiplicity of the Tanzanian society, but they can be seen to apply mainly to the young, educated and urban

generation of the country. In other words, the linguistic practices of the students should be seen in the light of the political and social reality in the country in general, concerning a small minority of Tanzanians, who have access to the linguistic resources needed for developing the kind of multilingual practices I have described in this thesis.

The fact that English has become not only the main medium of communication in the global context but also an important medium in the academic world, confirms that English will have an important role in Tanzania also in the future. Smit (2010; 2,-3, 46) writes that due to the growing number of international students, English knowledge is nowadays almost presupposed of tertiary level students and teachers all over the world. The increasing role of English at the universities is a hotly debated issue that is discussed also in Finland<sup>47</sup>. Nevertheless, the role of English and Kiswahili as well as the local languages should not be seen as opposed to each other but rather complementary. All the languages and linguistic practices discussed in this study have their own important position in the Tanzanian society.

Based on this study, I can only follow the recommendations of many other writers referred to in this study (for example Puja 2003, Prah 2003, Roy-Campbell & Qorro 1997) to change the language of instruction of the Tanzanian education system into Kiswahili also in the post-primary education. As Puja (2003, 126) writes, more research concerning the language use in higher education is needed and Kiswahili has a strong chance of becoming an example of adopting an indigenous African language as the language of instruction also in higher education.

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<sup>47</sup> For the role of languages, especially English, at Finnish universities see Ylönen&Kivelä, 2011.

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## APPENDIX

### *Questionnaire concerning language and identity*

My name is Iida Kalmanlehto and I am doing my Master of Arts in Finland with (linguistic) anthropology as my major subject. My master thesis theme is the feelings and identities the Tanzanian students at SAUT University attach to different languages they use. I want to know more about the different languages students speak, how they feel about using these languages and how they feel these languages influence their identity/personality.

With this questionnaire I hope to get more detailed background information about the actual language situations of the students. Tick the right answer or write shortly – if there's not enough space please feel free to use the other side of the paper. The answers will be processed anonymously.

#### 1. Background information

How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

Mark your sex female \_\_\_ male \_\_\_

What is your major subject? \_\_\_\_\_

Which year you are in? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you done some kind of degree/certificate/other kind of studies before starting university studies? If yes, in what kind of and in which language was used as language of instruction?

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2. a. Which languages do you speak and how well in terms of understanding, speaking, reading and writing? Please note the level of each language you know on a scale from 1 – 6 (mark the appropriate with V).

1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = somehow; 4 = moderate; 5 = well; 6 = very well

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2b. Please add the status of the languages (e.g. mother tongue, official/national language used in education etc) and note down, where you learned the languages and where you use it.

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3. Which of these languages you already know would you like to know better? Please explain why.

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4. Which of these languages is the most important language for you? Please explain why.

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5. Which language you like the most of the languages you know? Please explain why.

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6. Is there a language you know but you don't like so much? Please explain why.

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7. Which other language(s) would you like to know? Please state why and for which purpose.

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8. What kind of effect has the study at the university had in your competence to speak the languages you can? Have the studies for example increased or decreased your capacity to speak some language? If yes, please explain which language, how and why.

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9. Have the studies made one language more or less important than before? Please explain which language and why.

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10. How do you think the knowledge of different languages influences you as a person? How do you think you benefit from knowing them, or do you think it is harmful for you to know so many languages?

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11. Do you think languages in general have an influence on people's identities and the way they feel about themselves?

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12. How important is English for Tanzanian people, especially compared to Swahili? Please explain your answer.

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**Asante sana! Umenisaidia sana :)**

= Thank you very much! You helped me a lot.

## Hojaji kuhusu lugha na utambulisho

Jina langu ni Iida Kalmanlehto na ninatoka Finland. Ninasoma master yangu ya (linguistic) anthropology. Dhamira ya utafiti yangu ni maoni ya wanafunzi ya SAUT kuhusu lugha wanazotumia. Nataka kujua zaidi juu ya lugha mbalimbali ambazo zinatumiwa na wanafunzi: wanafunzi wanajihisi vipi na wanaathiriwa vipi na lugha hizi?

Kwa hojaji hii ninatumaini nitapata fahamu ya habari zaidi juu ya historia/background; juu ya hali halisi ya lugha wanafunzi wanazotumia. Thafadhali chagua jibu lako au uandike kifupi – ikiwa hakuna nafasi uandike nyuma ya karatasi tu. Majibu yatajadiliwa bila kutaja jina.

### 1. Background information

Una miaka mingapi? \_\_\_\_\_

Jinsia yako ME \_\_\_\_ KE \_\_\_\_

Unasoma nini? \_\_\_\_\_

Umesoma miaka mingapi? \_\_\_\_\_

Umesoma degree au certificate nyiningne kabla ya kuanza masomo chuo kikuu? Ikiwa ndio, umesoma nini na lugha gani imetumika kama lugha ya elimu?

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2. Unajua lugha ngapi na gani (kusikia, kusoma, kuongea, kuandika)? Uandike lugha na uwezo wako wa kila lugha kwenye kipimo hiki (weka alama ya V)

1 = kibaya sana 2 = kibaya 3 = kidogo; 4 = ya kiasi 5 = vizuri 6 = vizuri sana

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2. b. Thafadhali undike hadhi ya lugha ambazo unajua (kwa mfano lugha ya awali, lugha rasmi/ya kitaifa na kadhalika). Umejifunza lugha hizi wapi na unazitumia hizo wapi?

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3 Kati ya lugha hizo ambazo unajua tayari, ungetaka kujua lugha gani zaidi? Thafadhali ueleze kwa nini.

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4. Unaona lugha gani ni muhimu kwako kuliko zote? Thafadhali ueleze kwa nini.

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5. Unapenda lugha gani zaidi kuliko lugha zote unazojua? Thafadhali ueleze kwa nini.

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6. Je, kuna lugha ambaye unajua lakini huipendi sana? Thafadhali ueleze kwa nini.

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7. Ungetaka kujua lugha nyingine ambayo huifahamu kabisa? Thafadhali ueleze ni lugha gani na kwa sababu gani (madhumuni gani)?

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8. Masomo yako ya chuo kikuu yameathiriwa na lugha unazozijua? Unajua lugha fulani zaidi au kidogo zaidi kuliko kabla ya masomo yako? Thafadhali ueleze ni lugha gani, vipi na kwa nini.

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9. Masomo yako ya chuo kikuu yamefanya lugha fulani unayojua kupungua umuhimu kuliko lugha nyingine? Thafadhali ueleze ni lugha gani na kwa nini?

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10. Je, wewe mwenyewe, umeathiriwa kadiri gani na lugha unazozijua? Unadhani unafaidika au unapata matatizo kwa sababu unajua lugha nyingi?

1.Kwa ujumla, unadhani lugha inaathiri mtu na utambulisho wake – kwa mfano mtu anaweza kujiona tofauti kwa kujua lugha nyingine?

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12. Je, lugha ya kiingereza ni muhimu kadiri gani kwa Watanzania, hususani kuliko lugha ya Kiswahili? Thafadhali ueleze kwa nini.

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Asante sana! Umenisaidia sana. :)